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ABSTRACT

The eight papers in this collection focus on library activities in various geographical regions, e.g., Asia, Oceania, Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Western Australia: (1) "Future Approaches and Prospects of Computerised Information Network among the Countries of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)" (Abdullah Mostafa & M. Khan, Bangladesh); (2) "Australian Resource Sharing in Asia and Oceania--ABN (Australian Bibliographic Network), ACPAD (Australian Centre for Publications Acquired for Development), and BISA (Bibliographic Information on Southeast Asia)" (W. Linklater, E. Flowers, P. Watters, N. Cross, & A. Horton, Australia); (3) "Report of the Activities of the Regional Section for Asia and Oceania, 1987-1988" (J. S. Soosai, Malaysia); (4) "Resource Sharing in Southeast Asian Materials in Singapore" (Alice Loh, Singapore); (5) "Book Publishing and Distribution in East Africa" (Henry Chakava); (6) "Cooperation in the Area of Documentary Information for the Development of Latin America and the Caribbean: Basic Questions, Project Analyses, and Proposals" (Neusa De Macedo, Brazil); (7) "Mobile Libraries: The Western Australian and Northern Territory Experience" (Ron Davis, Australia); and (8) "The Wagon Is the Thing" (Martin Field, Australia). (CGD)

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IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE, SYDNEY, 1988

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FUTURE APPROACHES AND PROSPECTS OF COMPUTERISED INFORMATION NETWORK AMONG THE COUNTRIES OF SOUTH ASIAN ASSOCIATION FOR REGIONAL CO-OPERATION (SAARC)

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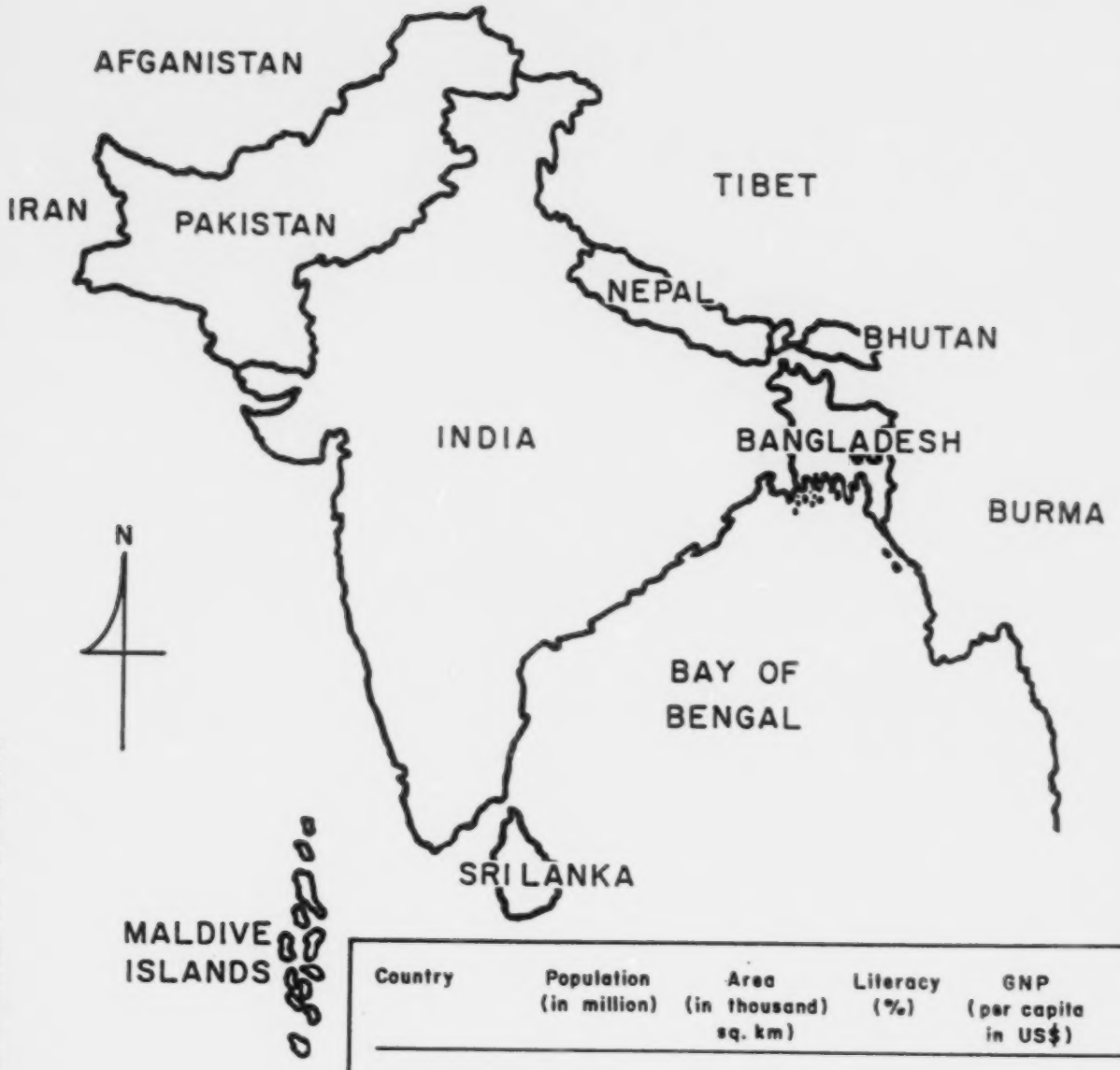
INTRODUCTION

There are two regional associations that came into being in Asia within the last two decades. With some 44 countries and more than half of the world's total population, Asia is the largest of 5 continents. The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) was born in 1967, with Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, Brunei, and the Philippines as its member states. The South Asian Association for Regional cooperation (SAARC) came into its formal existence in December 1985 at Dhaka, the capital city of Bangladesh, when Heads of seven South Asian countries jointly pledged to work together for a common future. Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri-Lanka are members of the SAARC, which comprises one-fifth of the world's total population and represents the biggest union of nations of its kind. Geographically, five countries form a contiguous land-mass, while the other two are island states located not very far from the shores of the sub-continent (fig 1). Capital cities of these seven countries are currently linked by air transport, telephone system, and mail service.

It is recognised that the growth and development and creative possibilities of an effective regional co-operation largely depend on the sharing of appropriate knowledge and information as well as in the sharing of each others experiences and resources. There has been a stress on an optimal use

Figure – 1

SAARC REGION



Source : The Times Atlas of the World

Country	Population (in million)	Area (in thousand) sq. km)	Literacy (%)	GNP (per capita in US$)
BANGLADESH	100·6	144	25	150
BHUTAN	1·2	47	10	160
INDIA	765·1	3,288	36	270
MALDIVES	·182	>·5	82	290
NEPAL	16·5	141	23	160
PAKISTAN	96·2	804	26	380
SRI LANKA	15·8	66	87	380

Source : World development report 1987, and World Almanac 1988

of human and material resources and on national and collective self-reliance basis among the SAARC member countries. Such an orientation is essentially urgent for the SAARC countries to meet, in the words of the Dhaka Declaration, "the formidable challenges posed by poverty, underdevelopment, low level of production, unemployment and pressure of population compounded by exploitation of the past and other adverse legacies". These tasks follow naturally from the agreement reached at Dhaka in the first summit of the Heads of seven nations as well as the activities ranging from ministerial level meetings to workshops and seminars by the policy-makers and subject-matter specialists.

It is expected that by mutual awareness and sharing of each others experiences, resources and expertise, the SAARC would be in a better position to give a definite direction to the researchers and others as well as to prevent wasteful parallel efforts. Besides, the regional countries can and may learn from one another and be able to benefit from the excellent research and training facilities that have already been set up in the region. This calls for an information network, which would enable one to be aware of others activities and draw on each others experiences.

In a seminar on information flow among the South Asian countries, jointly sponsored by the Press Institute of Bangladesh and the UNESCO, held in Dhaka in 1983, the participants agreed that the problems concerning information flow could effectively be tackled only through co-operative efforts and on reciprocal basis. The Declaration stated that the political, economic and cultural bonds among the countries in the region are conducive to the expansion of information exchange and flow, which would, in tern, strengthen efforts of co-operation, development, peace and amity.

This paper, conceptual in nature, proposes to establish a database of information relating to and of interest to the SAARC member countries and also proposes to establish a network which may enable all participating members to share the resource. A very simple database and an information network are conceived which will be not so complex and expensive to develop and manage. The concept is based on its affordibility and attainability in consideration of the region's technological facilities and competence.

THE CONCEPT OF NETWORK

The terms 'network' and 'networking', when applied to libraries and similar organisations, may mean to involve or assume an element of computerisation, but they are still used without this restriction. For example, it is stated that networks are no more than formal arrangements whereby materials, information and services are provided by a variety of users; computers and telecommunications are merely some of the tools used for facilitating communications among the network members. The network that we have proposed for the SAARC countries would, however, involve computers to be used in developing and sharing databases among the participating countries.

COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT

The idea of transmitting data in the form of electrical impulses became reality on 24 May 1844, when Samual Morse tapped out the first telegram on experimental iron wire from the chambers of the United States Supreme Court to the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Station in Baltimore, Maryland.

The telephone, developed by Alexander Graham Bell in 1876, is today one of the cheap mechanisms of transmitting both data and voice over communications lines; it has led to the development of an amazingly complex network of communications system throughout the world. Combining computer technology with communications system has provided the opportunity to process and transmit data from remote locations to computer systems over communications lines and through space by satellites. Communication satellites have quickly gained importance as a means for a global network of information transfer and have provided the means for a limited number of international high speed data links, but the prospect lies with the optical fibre cables that may bring forth a cheap means of data communication in the near future.

Communication networks are fast becoming popular due to the recent development of affordable cheap microcomputers. Current developments in optical disk technology, such as compact disk (CD-ROM), have opened up the microcomputers to tremendous possibilities which were not even possible on large mainframes of yester years. The large data storage capacity of compact disks and its safe and easy portability have opened up a new era of comparatively cheaper information transfer and its sharing. The deterrent to the use of satellite communications, the high cost, has now been overcome by physically transporting the data and accessing it through microcomputers. In fact, many databases, like MEDLINE, are now available on CD-ROMs as a cheaper alternative to paying exorbitant on-line search charges.

APPROACH TO INFORMATION NETWORK DEVELOPMENT

The overall approach to information network development should follow the spirit of development of ASTINFO: Regional Network for the Exchange of

Information and Experience in Science and Technology in Asia and the Pacific. It suggests that the network should be structured on a co-operative basis, since bilateral and multilateral collaborations can substantially increase the usefulness and effectiveness of the services to users as well as in the sharing of resources. The information network programme proposed here is in commensurate with the existing needs and interests of the SAARC member countries. Some countries having experience and possible solutions to particular type of problems could serve as a source of expertise and knowledge. This approach is within the spirit of Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries (TCDC) and that of the SAARC.

The central focal point of this network should be located in the capital of a member state having most reliable and convenient air, surface, postal and telecommunication links. Ideally, this may be, but not necessarily, with the proposed SAARC Documentation Centre. The network would serve focal point(s) located at each of the member states; that, in tern, may be connected to various other receiving points within its own country.

In identifying what kind of information the network would assimilate and disseminate, one must first identify the information users to ensure that their needs are studied properly. While identifying users and their needs, it should be kept in mind that the most who would immediately benefit from this network, are: 1) administrators, policy-makers and planners (they would need information on government documents, reports, statistical data, programme management studies, etc.), 2) researchers, teachers, scientists, practitioners, and students (they would need information on contemporary and up-to-date research projects, technologies, techniques, books, research

articles, etc.) and 3) political and social workers (they would need relevant information on issues of their interest so that they may criticise and guide public policies in the right direction).

The proposed network may preferably, for instance, provide information on the location of the available published and printed materials relating to and of interest to the SAARC member countries, or it may put all the available information materials and literature in a central database for sharing among the network participants. The latter one being more costly and complex to implement immediately a phased approach may be adopted. While it may start with bare minimum, design of the database and network should have the potential to grow as the need, affordibility and competence grow.

In selecting the technology, the guiding principle should be that it is i) easily attainable in no distant future, ii) technologically not too advanced in comparison to the environment, iii) neither too expensive nor too difficult to operate and maintain, iv) the initial cost to set it up is affordable by the SAARC with own or some external assistance.

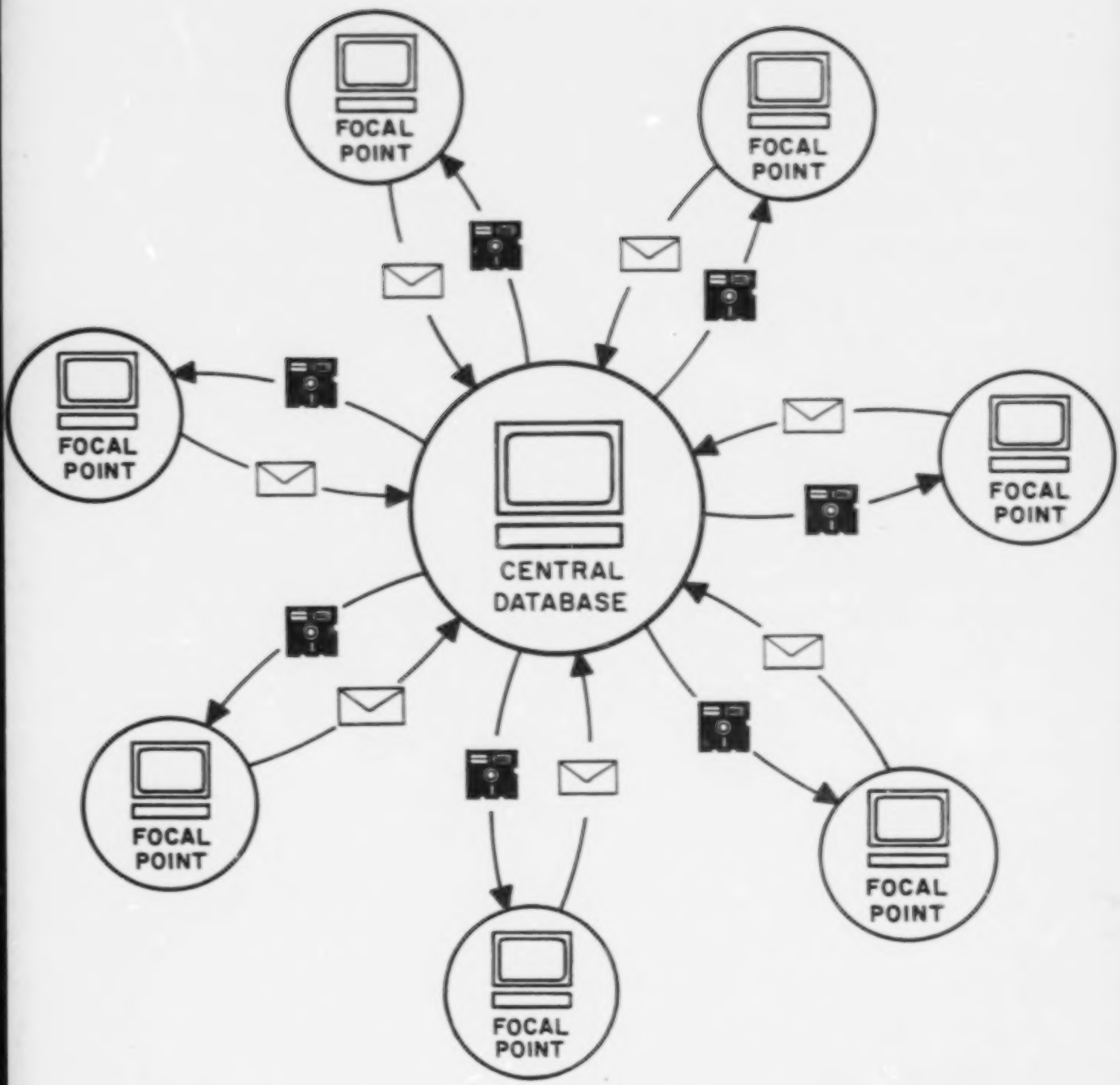
DESIGN OF THE NETWORK

The central database of the network could be developed using preferably 32-bit microcomputers, with high capacity compact disk storage medium. Each of the focal points should also have similar microcomputers which, in tern, may be connected via telephone lines to various receiving points within the country.

In the first phase, the central database may be created from the information, for example, collected in the SAARC Documentation Centre and from information prepared and supplied by the focal points of each member state. Once the database is complete and up-to-date, a copy of the same on diskettes or CDs may be made available to the focal points to down load it on to microcomputers. At this point in time the central focal point as well as all local (country) focal points will have the same and complete database of information available to them.

From that point onward, at a certain interval (say three months), each of the country focal points will prepare data input sheet for updating the central database and send it by mail to the centre. This shall contain necessary information about new publications and printed materials of the focal point's own country and as well as for the whole region which may become available to them. The central database would be updated with these information after proper editing and after elimination of redundancy. Once the central database is updated, copies of the consolidated updates on diskettes may then be sent by mail to focal points on diskettes for updating their databases (fig 2). Independent preparation of data input sheet by all focal points is likely to result in unnecessary duplication of work; duplication may be reduced by restricting focal points to report on their own country literature only; they may also report any other literature that originated outside the SAARC region. The latter one is to be subjected to duplicate checking before updating the central database. An appropriate mechanism has to be developed to eliminate duplication preferably at focal points to avoid unnecessary workload at the central focal point.

Figure -2



INFORMATION FLOW TO AND FROM CENTRAL DATABASE

While this operation will be more affordable and attainable in terms of cost and technology compared to others, significant amount of inter-country logistic management has to be carried out to achieve it. This may start with an inter-country workshop to decide on the financial contribution each country may make, on the structure and information content of the database, hardware and software, inter-country confidentiality of information, right to information of each country, management and operational procedures of the network and modus operandi for the exchange and supply of information materials, to each other. This forum may also be used to attract interested international agencies/donors to participate in the project.

CONCLUSION

The technology and the resources required to set up the kind of network proposed is indeed within the reach of the region; while on the other hand, there is the willingness and need for the exchange and availability of information. The SAARC Secretariat should initiate steps to establish a meeting of the two to start the process. A great medical librarian, John Shaw Billing, the founder of INDEX CATALOGUE and INDEX MEDICUS, was once in his latter years asked how he was able to achieve so much in his life - he answered, "I'll let you in on a secret, there is nothing really difficult if you only begin. Some people contemplate a task until it looms so big, it seems impossible, but I just begin and it gets done somehow".

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preparation of this paper. ICDDR,B is supported by countries and agencies which share its concern about the impact of diarrhoeal diseases on the developing world. Current major donors giving assistance to ICDDR,B are: The Aga Khan Foundation, Australia (ADAB), Bangladesh, Belgium, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Danish International Development Agency, the Ford Foundation, Japan, Norwegian Agency for International Development (NORAD), Saudi Arabia, Switzerland (SDC), Overseas Development Agency (UK), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), World Health Organization (WHO), World Bank, World University Service of Canada (WUSC), and United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF).

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93-ASIA-1-E

AUSTRALIAN RESOURCE SHARING IN ASIA AND OCEANIA - ABN, ACPAD AND BISA

by

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with the assistance of the

International Development Program of

Australian Universities and Colleges

Canberra, Australia

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ABSTRACT

The International Development Program works with selected overseas tertiary education bodies in co-operative assistance programmes selected in liaison with overseas governments. It also supplies books and serials no longer required by Australian libraries, academics and other professionals to academic libraries, mainly in the ASEAN countries, through the Australian Centre for Publications Acquired for Development. In co-operation with BISA, Bibliographic Information for South-east Asia, it has mounted training courses with particular emphasis on the use of computer technology and advanced bibliographic techniques.

AUSTRALIAN RESOURCE SHARING IN ASIA AND OCEANIA - ABN, ACPAD AND BISA

IDP, the International Development Program, has worked in the Asean countries with governments and universities to develop co-operative programmes to develop the educational infrastructure, mainly for food and agricultural education. The aim of IDP is to develop people and tertiary education staff and infrastructure in a way which matches the priorities of the nation with which IDP is co-operating. The methods used are in the hands of the co-operating institutions and there are contributions of resources, particularly human resources, by local and Australian participants. The aim is to add to the expertise of the nation receiving co-operative assistance, not just to advise and leave. The Australian Government provides basic finance for the Project, but the bulk of support is received through the resources contributed by associated countries and in particular from the services provided largely without cost to the programme from the Australian post-secondary education sector.

The programmes include making available academic experts from any Australian post-secondary education institution to assist in planning courses and course development; sending teams to present short continuing education classes; providing

scholarships for postgraduate study in Australia and working to provide a satisfactory environment for growth. Until his retirement at the end of 1981 Dietrich Borchardt, Chief Librarian of LaTrobe University, led work designed to provide books and serials to support IDP academic programmes in Indonesia, mainly at the HUB Universities (Hasanuddin, Udayana and Brawijaya), and in Malaysia at UPM, making a considerable contribution to some of the libraries involved. The programme was expanded in its nature by the provision of training courses at Hasanuddin University in Sulawesi for para-professional library staff. Furthermore, a number of librarians have undertaken professional courses in Australia and some from each country have made professional orientation visits.

Allan Horton succeeded to the position of IDP Library Consultant at a time when the scheme was growing rapidly and set up library programmes in Thailand and the Philippines and the consultancy was then split up with people like Bill Linklater, Ted Flowers, Arthur Ellis and Margaret Trask doing the work. IDP Library Consultants regard it as their responsibility to work within the library infrastructure of a country and to make contact with the key librarians who manage it. It is essential to the library being assisted that it should use local resources. The area of most difficulty for us however, has been encouraging changes in the teaching methods used towards research based learning. Furthermore, many librarians in ASEAN countries librarians work under particularly difficult conditions with respect to salaries and conditions of service, the bureaucratic infrastructure under which they must operate restricting the financial, physical and human resources with which they must work. This is no place to document their problems but when it

is realized that in, say, Indonesia, a country with a population of 160 million only about 50 graduate librarians a year are produced no other comment is necessary. IDP is mainly working in Indonesia, the Phillipines and Thailand with some activity elsewhere.

Indonesia

Most activity in Indonesia until recently has been in the developing universities. More recently, acting on the advice of the IDP consultants, the Director-General of Higher Education to set up a bibliographic database and a communications network to support libraries in those universities offering higher degrees. IDP's role has been to provide support to the Indonesian authorities in developing their plans to initiate these programmes, to work with senior librarians in this development and provide an Australian adviser to assist with the detailed planning. A commitment has been made to continue and supplement her work. This we believe is an example how relatively little financial support by IDP, in co-operation with bodies such as the British Council and other development agencies, trigger in significant improvements. A World Bank loan funds most of the programme.

Simultaneously with this development which will benefit all Indonesian libraries ultimately, IDP will continue its specific programmes with the HUB Universities and with a number of other selected universities.

The Philippines

In the Philippines, the programmes in the universities which were identified in 1981-2 related to giving support for PhD training in a consortium of three Manila libraries, other

advanced programmes at the University of the Philippines at Los Banos and work with universities away from the capital. Ted Flowers has the responsibility for this part of the programme. His concerns in the Philippines have been focused on strengthening the university libraries, and the national information structure in the National and public library system and Philippine scientific institutions. We have encouraged the libraries there, some of which are the leading libraries, to join more freely in and to encourage the development of a good interlibrary loan network and to start to build up their current serial subscriptions. The consortium of libraries have been encouraged to use IDP library funds for books and backfile serials which are new to the consortium and which are required for higher degree programmes and are in the areas of specialization. Furthermore, to allow the development of staff it has been suggested that the more advanced libraries should accept middle level staff from the other libraries with which IDP is working for staff development purposes. It is particularly pleasing that IDP has brought three Philippine academic librarians here to Australia during the conference. Since 1974 over $100,000 has been expended for consortium libraries and while this may be regarded as paltry by western standards this and the extensive use of donated resources has added significantly to the materials available in those countries.

Thailand

Bill Linklater's association with IDP began with a short-term visiting assignment at Chiang Mai University and Maejo Institute of Agricultural Technology. He went across the southern border to the University Sains Malaysia. He took the

role of a Library Consultant for Thailand with library programmes at CMU and MAIT, and work at other institutions.

The work in Thailand has been notable for its use of a variety of consultants. The necessity for this arose from the fact that the work was being done with audiovisual materials, research literature, database searching, library service upgrading, collection management, automation and cataloguing in machine-readable format. There have also been short study visits to Australia by Thai library directors and senior staff and participation by trainees from the area in BISA programmes. In the five years of activity there has been significant development in audiovisual services and library resources as well as considerable upgrading of library staff at the institutions concerned. Current developments in automation at CMU have in a large part developed from Australian input and are being utilized throughout a network of Thai academic libraries. There is a lot of goodwill for Australia and there is very good contact between Thai and Australian librarians who have been involved in this. It is interesting to mention as an aside that Mr. Linklater worked as a consultant to the Government of Brunei for the establishment of university library and educational technology centre in the new University of Brunei, Darussalan. This is one of the further ways in which skilled personnel co-operating in the IDP programme can be used.

ACPAD

The work of ACPAD, the Australian Centre for Publications Acquired for Development, has been dealt with in more detail by a paper given elsewhere in this Conference. ACPAD is an IDP initiative which aims to collect surplus books and journals

available in Australia and relocate them in tertiary institutions in South-east Asia and the Pacific. It has sent over 25,000 volumes to recipients in just over five years. Attention is paid to limiting material sent to that which is useful. ACPAD also will not assist libraries unless it is able to be sure that material is being incorporated in collections and this limits its clientele. It requires recipient libraries to specify their needs and uses IDP and other consultants to advice it.

BISA

BISA is the acronym for the body concerned with Bibliographic Information on South-east Asia and which was begun on the initiative of the University of Sydney. Initially set up to identify South-east Asian material held in Australia, it grew to be concerned with the cataloguing and purchase of material from overseas, particularly from Indonesia for a number of Australian libraries. It then formed an association with IDP in 1979 on the condition that it provided training for the librarians from Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore. The BISA machine-readable database was accessible in three formats - a master file of records in full Australian MARC specification, AUSMARC, an online file, and the BISA catalogue on microfiche reproduced from the master file. During 1984 the BISA file, with the generous co-operation and underwriting of the National Library of Australia, was converted and over ten thousand new records were added to ABN, the Australian Bibliographic Network. In line with the co-operative arrangements of IDP projects, participants from South-east Asia have made a major contribution to the development of the BISA database and in turn have benefited from participation in the programme. It has also been

concerned with other regions, such as the National Library of Vietnam.

As well as making its services directly available to Australian users, BISA has been able to make substantial contributions to South-east Asian librarianship due to its development as a network and this has been recognized on a number of occasions. There have been various special programmes in connection with Philippine, Thai, Malaysian and Indonesian bibliographic work which have been significant. It has also produced geographic codes for the provinces of Indonesia and the States of Malaysia and these have been adopted on a national level.

In 1988 it became impossible for the University of Sydney to continue to support BISA but negotiations are under way which are intended to preserve and maintain this database. It may be possible to say more about this at the meeting. Ms Helen Jarvis has accepted an appointment at the School of Librarianship at the University of New South Wales which is sympathetic to continuing her involvement in the education of librarians from the South-east Asian region. It should be emphasized however, that BISA is a University of Sydney project. No doubt Ms Jarvis, who is currently in China, will continue her interest in Asia, South-east Asia and the Pacific, and her new role will open up opportunities.

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International Federation of Library Associations
Fédération Internationale des Associations de Bibliothécaires
Internationaler Verband der Bibliothekar-Vereine
Международная Федерация Библиотенных Ассоциаций

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REGIONAL
SECTION FOR ASIA

REPORT OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE REGIONAL SECTION FOR ASIA AND OCEANIA 1987 - 1988

IFLA Brighton

Two open sessions were held for the Regional Section for Asia and Oceania at the 53rd IFLA Council and General Conference held in Brighton, UK, in August 1987.

In the professional session, two papers were presented. Edward Lim H.T. from Malaysia presented a paper on "The Computer and Knowledge Information Development in Malaysia: Some Perspectives". This was followed by a paper by Wang Jiabin from China on "New Development of Scientific and Technical Information Services in China". The session was well attended and good participation from the floor ensued in the questions and discussions.

The professional session was followed by a brief business session when the Chairman submitted the annual report of the Regional Section. With his imminent retirement from the Rubber Research Institute of Malaysia, the chairman pointed out that his seventeen years active participation in IFLA, especially in regional activities, will soon be phased out and the new Regional Standing Committee, with a newly elected regional Chairman, will take over from the Sydney Conference. However, he will still continue to be the Manager of the Regional Office until such time the IFLA Executive Board decides on the appointment of a new Manager and a new location for the Regional Secretariat.

Retirement of the Chairman

As of 27 September 1987, the Chairman retired as Chief Librarian of the Rubber Research Institute of Malaysia after 28 years of service. As of that date, the IFLA Regional Secretariat for Asia and Oceania ceased to be housed in the Institute and is temporarily located at the following address until such time the IFLA Executive Board decides on a more permanent address:

2, Jalan 4J
Ampang Jaya
68000 Ampang
Selangor, Malaysia
(Tel: 03-4566740)

As a consequence of the change of venue, the work of the Regional Secretariat, particularly its clearing house function for

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IFLA publications, have been seriously disrupted. The Chairman too had to be overseas for more than three months which inevitably contributed to delays in dealing with lots of correspondence received at the Regional Office. Any inconvenience caused by the present dislocation of services in the Regional Office is regretted. It is hoped that appropriate stpes will be taken soon to re-establish the Regional Office.

Search for a New Regional Office and Manager

In November 1987, the IFLA President and Secretary General visited Singapore to explore the possibility of hosting the Regional Office there. The Chairman of the Regional Section was invited to join them in Singapore. Discussions were held at different levels in Singapore and regretably the mission did not prove successful.

Subsequently, the Thai Library Association has been approached by the IFLA Secretary General to explore the possibility of they hosting the Regional Office. Though the Thai Library Association has agreed in principle, details are expected to be worked out when the Secretary General visits Bangkok on his way to Sydney in August. More details on the progress made might be known at the Sydney Conference.

Appointment of the New Regional Standing Committee

In Brighton it was reported that a total of seventeen nominations were received from the countries in the region to serve on the Regional Standing Committee and the distribution was as follows:

South East Asia: Three nominations: one from Thailand and two from Malaysia.

South Asia: Six nominations received: four from India, one from Nepal and one from Bangladesh.

West Asia: Three nominations received: one each from Kuwait, Iran and Jordan.

Oceania: Four nominations received: all from Australia.

East Asia: One nomination received from Japan.

Though the geographical distribution of nominations received were not in accordance with IFLA rules of procedure 8.8, the IFLA Secretary General ruled that all those nominated might be accepted provisionally for a period of two years before the Committee is reconstituted according to rules of procedure. The names and designations of the elected members of the Provisional Regional Standing Committee are given in the Appendix.

Election of Chairman of the Regional Standing Committee for Asia and Oceania

On 2 November 1987, circular letters were sent out to all the seventeen members of the Regional Standing Committee (RSC) calling for nomination of the Chairman for the RSC.

Before the closing date on 31 January 1988, three nominations were received duly seconded. They were as follows:

1) Dr D.E.K. Wijasuria - Malaysia
2) Prof P.B. Mangla - India
3) Dr Shawky Salem - Kuwait

While steps were planned to carry out a postal ballot to elect the Chairman for the RSC, money was made available by IFLA to call for a meeting of the newly elected Regional Standing Committee for Asia and Oceania.

Meeting of Regional Standing Committee: New Delhi, 21 & 22 April 1988

Limited funds were made available by IFLA to convene the first meeting of the newlu elected Regional Standing Committee in New Delhi on 21 and 22 April 1988. All the members from the Developing Countries were provided return air tickets to Delhi and nominal subsistence. A total of 13 members attended the meeting, including the Prof Co-ordinator of IFLA, Mr A.L. van Wesemael, the Manager of the Regional Office and one member from Australia who was financially supported by his own library. Three other members from Australia, the Japanese member, and the two members from Iran and Thailand were unable to attend.

The meeting provided an excellent opportunity for all the members to exercise their franchise in a secret ballot for the election of the Chairman. To accommodate the votes of those who were unable to attend, an exception was made by the IFLA Professional Co-ordinator to allow the postal ballots received. Just before the election, Prof P.B. Mangla decided to withdraw his candidacy for the post, leaving Dr D.E.K. Wijasuria and Dr Shawky Salem to contest the election. Out of the total of 15 votes cast, including 3 postal ballots, 4 were in favour of Dr Shawky Salem and 11 were in favour of Dr D.E.K. Wijasuria who was elected as the new Chairman of the RSC. Miss A.R. Anand (India) was then duly proposed by the Chairman to be the Secretary of the RSC which was seconded and Miss Anand was elected as the Secretary.

The meeting next discussed the geographical imbalance in the composition of the Committee. The meeting also recognised that in the interest of continuity and in order to motivate members of the Committee to undertake an effective programme of action, the Committee should be allowed to serve the full 4 year term with the proviso that the IFLA Secretary General should in the meantime take the necessary steps for appropriate rationalisation of the

composition of the Committee in line with the IFLA rules of procedure.

In the programme of actions proposed for the Regional Section, the following were some of the proposals made:

1) A conference of Librarians and Information Specialists in Asia and Oceania.

2) A Directory of Librarians and Information Personnel in Asia and Oceania.

3) An analytical survey and study of the information infrastructure of countries within each Regional Section.

4) A programme of continuing education planned over a five-year period.

5) A union catalogue of periodicals in Asia and Oceania.

6) Exchange programmes for regional co-operation.

7) Control of national imprints and the implementation of UBC and UAP programmes in the context of Asia and Oceania.

8) Access to automated systems with special reference to use of CD-ROM.

9) Conservation of Library materials.

10) Book production in the national language.

11) Status of Librarians.

Each of the proposals were briefly discussed and members were asked to prepare brief guidelines for their possible implementation for discussion at Sydney.

The meeting briefly touched on the Nordic proposal on the implementation for the IFLA core programme on the Advancement of Librarianship in the Third World (ALP). The meeting, while welcoming the IFLA initiatives with the Nordic countries in the matter of the ALP implementation, stressed that a region as vast as the Third World would need several focal points for ALP implementation, and the initiative of the Nordic countries should not necessarily preclude other countries in any part of the world to come forward with any plans they may have to assist in the IFLA ALP programme.

Acknowledgement from the Outgoing Chairman

As one who has been involved with IFLA programme for the third world countries since its very inception some eighteen years ago and the founder Chairman of the Regional Section for Asia and Oceania, I cannot help feeling somewhat nostalgic in submitting my last annual

report as the outgoing Chairman of the Regional Section for Asia and Oceania. I wish to take this opportunity to place on record the co-operation extended by the Director and Board of the Rubber Research Institute of Malaysia in allowing me the time to participate in IFLA activities all these years as well as for providing the facilities to host the Regional Secretariat in the Institute. I wish to also thank the many friends and colleagues in the International Library World represented in IFLA, especially Dr Herman Liebaers, one of the most distinguished past Presidents of IFLA who was responsible for getting me involved in IFLA and Ms Margret Winjstroom, our gracious and able past Secretary General of IFLA, with whom I enjoyed an excellent working relationship throughout her whole career in IFLA. To them and all the many colleagues all over the world who have so generously shared their valuable experience and time in our unending international effort through IFLA to serve the cause of third world library development, I convey my profound thanks. Without them, the eighteen years of my service to IFLA would not have been such a rewarding and memorable experience.

J.S. Soosai
Outgoing Chairman

22.8.88

Appendix 1

Members of the Standing Committee of the Regional Section for Asia and Oceania

South East Asia

Dr D.E.K. Wijasuria, Director General
National Library of Malaysia (Chairman)

Mrs Mariam Abdul Kadir, Director
Support Services, National Library of Malaysia

Ms Daruna Somboonkun, Associate Director
AIT, Bangkok

South Asia

Ms A.K. Anand, Librarian
Panjab University Library, Chandigarh, India (Secretary)

Prof P.B. Mangla, Head, Dept. of Library and
Information Science, University of Delhi

Mr M.K. Jain, President of Government of
India Library Association

Mr C.P. Vashishth, Reader, Dept. of Library and
Information Science, University of Delhi

Mr Zakiuddin Ahmed, President
Library Association of Bangladesh/Librarian
National Health Library Dhaka

Mrs Shanti Mishra, Chief Librarian
Tribhunan University, Central Library, Nepal

West Asia

Dr Shawky Salem, Director of Information Department
Arab Centre for Medical Literature, Kuwait

Dr A. Horri, Prof of Library and Information Science
Department of Library Science, Tehran University, Iran

Mr Izzat Awf Zahidah, Deputy Librarian
The University of Joran

Oceania

Mrs Alison Crook, Deputy State Librarian
State Library of New South Wales

Mr A. Ketley, Acting Director
National Co-ordination, National Library of Australia

Ms Jenny Adams, Ex-Director
Library Association of Australia

Miss Carol M. Mills, Librarian
Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education, NSW

East Asia

Prof Toshio Hamada, Professor, School of Library and
Information Science, Keio University, Japan

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RESOURCE SHARING IN SOUTHEAST ASIAN MATERIALS IN SINGAPORE

PAPER SUBMITTED FOR PRESENTATION AT

THE OPEN FORUM, IFLA CONFERENCE,

30 AUG TO 3 SEP, 1988, HELD

IN SYDNEY

BY

ALICE LOH

IR053730

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Abstract

Resource sharing in Southeast Asian materials in Singapore

Resource sharing is defined as sharing of the materials in libraries, which necessitates cooperation and coordination by libraries in reducing duplication so as to achieve greater access to a wider range of materials for the use of researchers. This paper discusses resource sharing programmes in Singapore in S.E. Asian materials, in the past and present and in the light of the latest technological developments.

The resource sharing programmes are discussed under the headings cooperative acquisitions, cooperative bibliographic projects and interlibrary lending.

I Libraries had from the 1970s cooperated through informal acquisitions policies so as not to duplicate each other's collections. This has now been facilitated by SILAS (Singapore Integrated Library Automation Service), a national online bibliographic network providing a union catalogue of holdings of major Singapore libraries. However, even with such a development, resource sharing would be ineffective if the libaries in Singapore are unwilling to reduce duplication and share their resources so as to maximise the available funds provided in the country. Hence, the meeting convened by the Director, National Library, Singapore on 3 May 1988 was most timely as it sought to review the S.E. Asian collection development policies in appropriate libraries.

II Resource sharing through various cooperative bibliographic projects in the past, aided by the active role played by the Library Association of Singapore and in cooperation with regional organisations, has considerably strengthened the S.E. Asian collections of libraries in Singapore. Recently, it has been facilitated further by SILAS.

III Resource sharing through interlibrary lending will also be revolutionised through the implementation of SILAS, especially through the use of its union catalogue with holdings of various libraries in Singapore. It would considerably increase the present low rate of interlibrary lending in Singapore libraries and between Singapore and libraries abroad.

IV Resource sharing in view of other online databases and technological information developments is also discussed.

Alice Loh
Head Central Lending Library
Ag Asst Director (Branches)
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RESOURCE SHARING IN SOUTHEAST ASIAN MATERIALS IN SINGAPORE

Definitions

Basically, resource sharing means the sharing of materials by libraries as it is impossible for any single library to acquire all the resources required for information and research. It would invariably reduce duplication of materials and enable greater access to library holdings and regional imprints.

Southeast Asian (S. E. Asian) materials may be defined as materials printed or published or produced by electronic media on S.E. Asia or by S. E. Asians within or outside the S. E. Asian region, which comprises mainly:

> Brunei, Burma, Indonesia, Khmer Republic, Laos, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, and Asean as a whole. (A few libraries, including the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, include the Pacific & Melanesia/Oceania.)

This paper will thus discuss programmes undertaken to increase the range of S. E. Asian materials through resource sharing programmes such as cooperation in acquisitions, bibliographic control and interlibrary lending.

The infrastructure

Singapore is a small compact city state of 622.6 square kilometres in S.E. Asia with a population of 2.6 million and a per capita indigenous GNP of S$13,982 in 1987 at current market price.

It has many advantages to develop as a centre for the region where researchers could find most of their required S. E. Asian material rather than have to visit e.g. Cornell University or the School of Oriental & African Studies.

Moreover, it has considerable resources in S. E. Asian materials in the major libraries, a relatively developed library profession, a national computerised library network, an advanced telecommunications system with a forward looking government which emphasises productivity and information technology (IT) and the presence of a large number of international, regional and commercial organisations with their own information services contributing towards a national information system. Thus libraries could further maximise their resources through cooperative programmes.

I Cooperative acquisitions

Singapore libraries have a wealth of materials on S. E. Asia mainly in the three larger libraries i.e. the National Library of Singapore (NL) the National University of Singapore (NUS) and the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) as can be seen in a recent survey which I made in August, 1988. (Table 1).

Generally, Singapore libraries cooperate actively in the area of acquisitions. They try not to duplicate one another's collections where expensive or specialised materials are concerned, particularly in S. E. Asian materials. Information on the proposed purchases of such materials are circulated among the larger libraries before a decision is made for purchase.

"In building up the collection, care has been taken to complement the Southeast Asian collections in the National University of Singapore Library and the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies. The National Library, for example, does not generally acquire materials in Burmese, Thai, Tagalog and Vietnamese which are available in the Institute. As it is the main library accessible to all Singapore citizens and residents, the emphasis is on material in the four official languages excluding law and medicine, with some exceptions for material in commercial and constitutional law, or customary law and health

rather than medicine"[1]. Similarly, the informal cooperative acquisitions that exist in Singapore has rendered the acquisition of Malaysia/ Singapore materials less important for the ISEAS since there is a sizeable collection in the University of Singapore and the National Library.

Besides these larger collections of S. E. Asian materials, those of the other specialised libraries of the SEAMEO Regional Language Centre (RELC), the Institute of Education (IE), Ministry of Education HQ Library and Information Centre (MOE), the Instructional Materials Library (IML) and the Trinity Theological College Library also have valuable collections of theses and research publications which complement each other's resources, although some were unable to give a more detailed breakdown of their collections.

SILAS

With the inauguration of the Singapore Integrated Library Automation Service (SILAS) on 10 April, 1987, a national online bibliographic network, libraries and researchers had access to a bibliographic database of millions of books, serials, music and audio-visual materials from U.K., U.S. and Southeast Asia. As at the end of 1987, the database contains some 4.2 million titles. In addition 10% of the

most important libraries in Singapore are now cataloguing online on SILAS. In particular, the following four important files on the region are especially useful for collection development and rationalisation of acquisitions:[2]

- **SNB** some five years of Roman script cataloguing from the Singapore National Bibliography;

- **PICA** the machine-readable South East Asian imprints of the Royal Dutch Library, the University of Leiden and some eight other university libraries in the Dutch bibliographic network;

- **BISA** bibliographic information on South East Asia contributed by specialist departments such as those in the University of Sydney, Monash University, Australian National University and the National Library of Australia.

- **MALMARC** all the Malaysian and Indonesian imprints from the library automation consortium of Malaysia, MALMARC.

Morever, as participants could select or de-select expensive items from the holdings information pertaining to Singapore libraries, unnecessary duplication of materials in the libraries could be reduced.

As at 22 Apr 88, the SILAS National Union Catalogue recorded a total of 400,000 titles in Singapore libraries. Of this total, the absolute maximum number of titles with more than one holding is 72,595 or 21%. As libraries continue to contribute data on their holdings it will grow rapidly and the overlap rate has been estimated as up to 20%. [3]

It was thus most timely when the Director of the National Library, Singapore, convened a meeting of 8 Singapore libraries on 3 May 1988 to "review the Southeast Asia collection development policies in appropriate libraries so as to ascertain whether there was any unnecessary duplication and identify important gaps. The main concern was thus not with basic materials in libraries but the fringe materials which were often less easy to obtain or access". [4]

It is only by such continuous efforts to review their acquisition policies with a view to resource sharing that libraries in Singapore can build strong in-depth collections comparable to those of developed countries for the use of researchers.

II Cooperative bibliographic projects

In the area of cooperation to provide greater bibliographic access to library holdings and regional imprints, many projects had also been implemented in the past. These include the basic bibliographical tools spearheaded by the National Library like the

Singapore National Bibliography, the Singapore Periodicals Index and Union Catalogue of Scientific and Technical Serials in which 30 libraries participated, including public, academic, government and quasi-government libraries.

These projects, except the Singapore Periodicals Index, will soon be updated by the SILAS network with its main objective of building up a national biblographic database for all types of library materials to serve the bibliographic needs of the nation and provide a single pool of up-to-date records for online cataloguing and reference as well as acquisition.

Other organisations and projects have resulted in a wider bibliographic access to Singapore libraries and facilitated resource sharing. The Library Association of Singapore (LAS) under the leadership of a group of dedicated librarians has played an important role in cooperative projects in Singapore as well as in regional projects working closely especially with Malaysia and the S. E. Asia region which had greatly enriched our bibliographical resources and collections. It was the LAS Sub-Committee on Library Automation (SCOLA) which proposed the National Bibliographic Database project in 1981 which resulted in the implementation of SILAS.

Other earlier projects, in conjunction with Singapore libraries, include the Bibliography on Malay Culture, the setting up and participation in the International Serials Data System and Southeast Asia (ISDS-SEA), and cooperative microfilming programmes under the Sub-Committee on Microforms of the Joint Standing Committee on Library and Bibliographical Services (JSCLCBS) of the library associations of Malaysia and Singapore.

One of the most important organisations that has promoted resource sharing is the Conference (now Congress) of Southeast Asian Librarians (CONSAL) founded in 1970. One of its objectives was to cooperate with other regional and international organisations and institutions in the fields of librarianship, library education, documentation and related activities".[5] Although some of its recommendations have not been implemented, due to lack of adequate funds, governmental or organisational support, a number of projects have promoted resource sharing.

Among one of the most successful CONSAL projects was the Masterlist of Southeast Asian Microforms serving as a "tool to identify, locate and make available for reference purposes all documents in Southeast Asia on microform".[6] Completed and published by SARBICA in 1978, its Supplement, covering 1978 to 1983 imprints, was compiled and published by the National Library of Singapore in 1985 in

2) to promote and coordinate the acquisition within each country of library materials of the region deemed to be of continuing importance.

The services of the Consortium had resulted in improved communication amongst members and non-member institutions, with Singapore, Malaysia & Indonesia being the most active member countries participating in interlibrary lending. From 1985 to 1987 the Consortium handled a total of 680 requests for materials which included photocopies or microforms of whole books and runs of periodicals and newspapers. For the same period, the National Library of Singapore had obtained through the Consortium a total of 124 titles, mainly of indigenous imprints, of which 30 titles were photocopies (consisting of 2303 sheets) 58 titles were books (consisting of 60 volumes) and 36 titles were microforms (consisting of 110 sheets of microfiches). Consortium services had also revealed gaps in members' collections of national imprints. It had also planned to implement another one of its objectives i.e. initiating action to reduce barriers to the free flow of library materials within the region.

III Interlibrary Lending

As stated earlier, besides bibliographic access to millions of records in various parts of the world, SILAS also provides libraries in Singapore with access to a union catalogue showing online the holdings

of participating libraries in Singapore. This speeds up interlibrary loans and increased usage of interlibrary loans services is expected when the records of libraries have been fully loaded. Its printout of the SILAS Union List of Serials on comfiche is well used at the National Library and its Key to SILAS holdings, 1988 tabulating the loan policies of all libraries with holdings on SILAS is also available for consultation online. Furthermore the LAS Ad-hoc Committee on Inter-library Lending has prepared the Revised Interlibrary Loan Code 1987, updating the Interlibrary Loan Code of 1969 which sets out guidelines and procedures to be followed for interlibrary loans. Most libraries also use the standard request form printed and sold by the LAS for loans between Singapore libraries.

Distances between libraries are short in Singapore and there is no problem in transporting materials from one library to another. Moreover as facsimile machines are available in most large libraries and in the public and private sectors, speed in delivery together with saving of manpower is achieved through facsimile transmission, enabling nearly instant transmission of documents to requesting institutions. However, despite these favourable conditions and the recognition that no single institution can provide all the materials that it would require for research purposes, libraries still continue to restrict the loan of certain types of material and this could hamper research.

In a survey which I made in Aug 1988, (please see Table 2.1), it is heartening to note that the National Library lends out a large number of its S.E. Asian materials to the smaller special libraries as well as the National University of Singapore (NUS), a total of 276, and borrowed only 21, in 1987. The NUS, ISEAS and RELC also lent their S.E. Asian materials to the smaller special libraries. In the case of the ISEAS, a large number, 271 items out of 360 were requested and loaned out to the Ministry of Defence Library. It is regretted that other libraries were unable to provide more detailed statistics for comparison. However the satisfaction rate is high for most materials requested. This is mainly because most requests for materials from libraries in Singapore are often made only after ascertaining on the telephone that an item is available in that particular library.

As can be seen from Table 2.2, for requests for S.E. Asian materials sent to libraries abroad and received from libraries abroad, the National Library recorded a satisfaction rate of 74.42% and 77.22% respectively. These included requests through the NLDC-SEA Consortium for photocopies or microfilms in lieu of loan and long runs of news papers and serials which are regarded as acquisitions. The Institute of Southeast Asian Studies and the SEAMEO Regional Language Centre recorded a 100% satisfaction rate for both requests sent abroad and requests received from libraries abroad. It should also be noted that most Singapore libraries sent their requests for S.E. Asian materials to libraries in the region and the high satisfaction rate is a healthy sign indicating that these libraries are able to satisfy such requests.

From Table 2.2 it is also useful to note the range of countries from which Singapore libraries received the largest requests for S.E. Asian materials, eg the National Library of Singapore received 24 requests from Malaysia, 7 from Australia, 6 from the United Kingdom, 6 from Hong Kong and 4 from Mauritius. The NUS and ISEAS received requests from Malaysia and the RELC received requests from Malaysia as well as Western Australia.

Within the confines of this limited survey (covered only 1987 figures) the high satisfaction rates achieved for requests for S.E. Asian materials received from libraries abroad compares more favourably with statistics from an earlier survey carried out in 1980 (Wijasuriya and Abdullah Kadir, 1980). J. S. Parker, who analysed this 1980 survey further, quoted 40% as the overall satisfaction rates for loans to foreign institutions from libraries in Singapore, adding "which perhaps may be taken to provide a more accurate indication of the ability of libraries in the countries covered by the survey to meet requests from foreign libraries (which are presumed to be mainly for local publications)."[8]

Although the volume of interlibrary loans among libraries in Singapore and between Singapore and overseas libraries for S.E. Asian materials is still relatively low, Singapore libraries could cooperate further in developing their collections, to complement those of each other, so that they would become a more realiable source of S.E. Asian imprints.

Recent developments

With the recent rapid advancement in information technologies in Singapore, there should also be a move towards greater information resource sharing among libraries and organisations. This would avoid costly duplication and an economical use of resources for the benefit of researchers.

A few libraries eg the NUS Library, the Monetary Authority of Singapore library and the Singapore Command and Staff College Library already have computerised information retrieval systems. In addition, the NUS, the Singapore Institute for Scientific and Industrial Research and the American Library Resource Centre can also provide on-line information searches.

The National Library also has plans for the computerisation of its information file on Singapore and Southeast Asia including the Singapore Periodicals Index.

With the Singapore government's emphasis on information technology (IT) many computerised databases have been rapidly developed. These include the Ministry of Trade and Industry's economic and demographic statistics compiled by the Department of Statistics, and the Ministry of Communication's proposed data on Singapore. The Stock Exchange of Singapore also provides online information about companies in Singapore.

Other IT developments include information services such as Teleview, a recently introduced high-tech electronic system developed

by the Telecommunications Authority of Singapore (Telecoms) which gives the public access to information and services at home and Tradenet, a fully computerised system for fast and efficient trade documentation which will be fully operational early next year and will link traders, importers, exporters, shipping agents and freight forwarders with government departments such as the port and airport authorities or customs. The latter is developed by the Trade and Development Board and the National Computer Board as part of the government's National Information Technology Plan.

There is also a growing number of commercial databases including those providing online access to the full texts of a host of international journals and newspapers on economic, social and political subjects for example LEXIS, NEXIS, World Reporter, Datastar, etc, which also include references to S.E. Asian topics.

Libraries in Singapore should not only tap their resources but cooperate to maximise the use of the new information resources for the maximum benefit of its users.

Conclusion

Thus, with this infrastructure of an online national bibliographic network, together with past and present programmes for resource sharing facilitated by advanced communications systems and advances in information technologies, libraries in Singapore should effectively organise themselves for the maximum development of their collections in S.E. Asian materials.

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WPR: L6a/seam

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Table I

LIBRARY COLLECTIONS IN S. E. ASIAN MATERIALS*

	Name of Library	Book Collection (as at Dec 1987)	No. of books on S. E. Asia & % of total collection (as at Dec 1987)	No. of Periodical titles (as at Dec 1987)	No. & % of Periodical titles on Southeast Asia (as at Dec 1987)
1	National Library (NL)	2,671,796	86,710 (3.25%)	10,022	6,039 (60.26%)
2	National University of Singapore Library (NUS)	1,394,109 (as at June, 1987)	**48,500 (3.48%)	12,800 (as at June 1987)	Not available
3	Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS)	70,741	40,144 (56.75%) (including periodicals)	2,019	Not available
4	SEAMEO Regional Language Centre (RELC)	40,867	14,000 (34.26%) (approx.)	412	81 (19.66%)
5	Institute of Education Library (IE)	130,285	Not available	710	Not available
6	Ministry of Education HQ Library & Information Centre (MOE)	56,000	Not available	281	4
7	Instructional Materials Library (IML)	8,000	50 (0.63%) (approx.)	25	Nil
8	Trinity Theological College Library (TTC)	30,000	4,000 (13.33%)	100	10 (10%)

* includes all titles related to S.E. Asia and/or published in the area and/or by nationals of S. E. Asia

** Singapore/Malaysia Collections (S/MC (Reference Collections) consisting of materials on Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei & Asean as an entity: 48,500 volumes. There are duplicate/multiple copies of S/MC titles on the open shelves.

Table 2.2

STATISTICS OF INTERLIBRARY LENDING IN S. E. ASIAN MATERIALS

Name of Library	No. of requests for SE Asian materials sent to libraries abroad			Mainly sent to/no. of requests sent	No. of requests for SE Asian materials received from libraries abroad			Mainly received from/ no. of requests received
	Total no. of requests sent	Total satisfied	Satisfaction rate		Total no. of requests received	Total satisfied	Satisfaction rate	
1 National Library, Singapore	172	128	74.42%	Indonesia/114 Thailand/37 Philippines/14 United Kingdom/2 Malaysia/1	79	61	77.22%	Malaysia/24 Australia/7 United Kingdom/6 Hong Kong/6 Mauritius/4
2 National University of Singapore Library*	3	NA	-	NA	3	1	33.33%	Malaysia/1
3 Institute of S.E. Asian Studies	2	2	100%	Malaysia/2	6	6	100%	Malaysia/6
4 SEAMEO Regional Language Centre	-	-	-	NIL	13	13	100%	Malaysia/12 Western Australia/1
5 Institute of Education Library	167**	134**	80.24%	Australia Malaysia	5**	3**	60%	Malaysia** Brunei** Hong Kong**
6 Ministry of Education	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL

Table 2.1

STATISTICS OF INTERLIBRARY LENDING IN S. E. ASIAN MATERIALS

Name of Library	No. of requests for SE Asian materials sent to libraries in Singapore			Mainly sent to/no. of requests sent	No. of requests for SE Asian materials received from libraries in Singapore			Mainly received from/ no. of requests received
	Total no. of requests sent	Total satisfied	Satisfaction rate		Total no. of requests received	Total satisfied	Satisfaction rate	
1 National Library, Singapore	21	21	100%	ISEAS/5 NTUC/5 NUS/3 MCD/2	280	276	98.57%	SBC/42 NA/36 MCD/32 ST/26 NUS/23

100-AFRICA-1-E

BOOK PUBLISHING AND DISTRIBUTION IN EAST AFRICA

PAPER PRESENTED BY MR HENRY CHAKAVA TO IFLA CONFERENCE IN SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA IN AUGUST 1988.

1. INTRODUCTION

The three countries of East Africa, namely Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, occupy an area of 1,763,711 sq. kms and have a population of about 56.89m. The peoples of the three countries shared a common historical experience under British colonialism between 1884 and 1963, although Tanzania mainland (or as it was known then, Tanganyika) was under German rule for a while. The wave of nationalist movements in Africa in the late 1950s and 1960s brought independence to the three sister countries at about the same time. Tanzania was the first to gain independence in 1960, with Kenya and Uganda following suit in 1962 and 1963 respectively.

These three countries have always shared a common destiny. During the cononial period there existed regional cooperation between them under the auspices of the East African High Commission which was later renamed the East African Community in 1967. Under this community, the three countries had common services in the areas of rail and air transport, postal services and trade. The community, in fact, had its own legislative body known as the East African Legislative Assembly which formulated policy for community services. Under the community was also an executive arm (represented by the various wings of the community) and the East African Court of Appeal. Thus under the community was an even more solid expression of the common destiny of the peoples of East Africa.

Because of increasing economic policy disparities, however, the EAC broke up in 1977. Tanzania had been taking a clearly defined socialist direction in its policy decisions while Kenya favoured the Western (capitalist) path. Insecurity created by political instability in Uganda contributed to the disintegration of the EAC with each of the sister countries setting up new national bodies to take over the services that had hitherto been commonly handled. The new national bodies have since operated with varying degrees of success.

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The aforesaid is essentially aimed at demonstrating the commonality of the destiny of the three East African countries. Let us now see how this is borne out in the area of publishing (book production and distribution) which is the subject of this paper.

Christian missionaries were the first publishers in East Africa. They set up mission presses at the coast initially and eventually spread inland. In Kenya, for instance, the Church Missionary Society (CMS) helped in the establishment of the first commercial publisher called Ndia Kuu Press in the early 1940s. This organisation whose imprint wa "The Highway Press" was later to become the East African Literature Bureau at the inception of the East African High Commission in 1948. The bureau developed characteristics of both a commercial and state publisher.

Then commercial publishers started arriving in the early 1950s with the appearance of Longman and Oxford on the scene. After independence many publishers, both local and foreign, sprang up and started business or were locally incorporated. State, or state sponsored publishers too came on the scene shortly after independence. The East African Publishing House (EAPH) was set up by the East African Institute of Social and Cultural Affairs in 1965. And in the same year the Jomo Kenyatta Foundation (JKF), Uganda Publishing House (UPH) and Tanzania Publishing House (TPH) were also set up.

The late 1960s and the 1970s were a period of mixed fortunes for publishing in Kenya, while Uganda and Tanzania witnessed a decline in the industry owing to political instability in the former and unfavourable economic policies in the latter. This trend has continued into the 1980s.

The rest of this paper takes a broad look at the present publishing situation in East Africa, discussing, as it does, the factors affecting book production and distribution. There is a general paucity of coverage of Uganda, basically because political strife over the last two decades has virtually brought the industry to a standstill. There are, however, certain factors which have affected the publishing industry in all the three countries that we shall now look at.

2. PUBLISHING

(i) BOOK PRODUCTION

a) Government involvement:

We mentioned the emergence of state or state sponsored publishing establishments earlier. Government involvement in publishing has led to the creation of state publishing monopolies. Firms like UPH, TPH, JKF and the Kenya Literature Bureau (which was formed after the collapse of the EAC) are parastatal organizations which publish for the governments. The government, thus, commissions its employees (teachers) to write the books and uses the parastatals to publish them. Through the governments' institutions for curriculum development and inspectorates the books are vetted and recommended, and using similar set-ups they are distributed and bought by the same governments for use in schools. Such a situation does not augur well for the production of high quality books in terms of content, treatment or finishing.

In Kenya, this feature has become particularly pronounced with the introduction of the 8-4-4 education system (which provides for 8 years of Primary school education, 4 years of secondary school and 4 years of university). To stem off what is labelled as "exploitation by commercial publishers", the government has decided that school books will be written at the Kenya Institute of Education (the National curriculum development centre) and published by the two state publishers, Jomo Kenyatta Foundation and Kenya Literature Bureau.

In looking at factors which influence publishing in East Africa, one reaches the conclusion that excessive government involvement has weakened the base of commercial publishers and killed the spirit of enterprise and innovation in the industry. One wants to see a situation whereby the government not only identifies areas which require books but also provides assistance (in terms of loans) to commercial publishers who venture to publish in areas that are not financially viable. In East Africa such areas include fiction, childrens' books and general books.

b) Lack of publishing infra-structure:

The publishing infra-structure in East Africa is still largely undeveloped. A quick survey of the main areas of book production and distribution will testify to this.

Authors:

Judging by the number of unsolicited manuscripts which flow into publishing houses, one would say there is no shortage of authors in East Africa. Heinemann Kenya Limited receives about 300 such manuscripts a year. But the writers are beset with numerous problems.

Firstly, a good number of these authors write for the school market without studying the syllabuses thoroughly. They are frustrated when their manuscripts are turned down by the publishers. Secondly, writing is yet to become a rewarding career. It is true an author can draw good royalties on school books, but the nature of the market is such that one cannot live on full time writing.

Publishers:

There are far too few publishers in East Africa. As earlier stated, there is hardly any publishing of books in Uganda while Tanzania has only five "major" publishers, producing averagely five titles every year. These five are: The Ministry of Education, Tanzania Publishing House (TPH), Dar-es-Salaam University Press (DUP), Tanzania Library Services (TLS), and Eastern Africa Publications (EAPL). Even established international companies like Longman have virtually ceased their publishing operations in Tanzania.

Of the three East African States, Kenya's publishing industry is by far the most developed. A combination of state publishers, commercial publishers (foreign and local) and religious presses produce an average of 150 new titles per year. But even here, continued performance and/or improvement will only come if these publishers receive government help and avoid duplication of publications for the school market, while other key areas are left unexploited because they are considered unviable.

Printers

In Uganda and Tanzania these are far too few and expensive. In the latter, for instance, there are only seven printers which can handle book work, namely - Printpak, National Printing Company, Tanzania Mission Press, Tanzania Litho, Tanzam, International, Ndanda Mission Press and Vuga Press. But even these seven do not have much work having seen that each one produces only five titles annually, on average.

The situation is far less bad in Kenya where 150 new titles are issued annually. There is no paucity of printers here, though, like Tanzania, they are underuntilized. Publishers could in fact promote the printing industry here by printing their books locally. The government on the other hand can help the printing industry by pricing paper favourably and giving rebates on educational materials. Such rebates existed at one time but have since been abolished.

Raw materials

We have mentioned the need for favourable paper prices. Kenya's printing industry gets most of its paper locally from Pan Paper Mills in Webuye while Tanzania's paper is also locally produced at Mfindi. Sadly, though, is the fact that in both countries locally produced paper is priced higher than imported paper. Yet there are import restrictions. Other materials like printing plates, inks and chemicals are also readily available in both Kenya and Tanzania, although they are expensive. The net result is invariably an increase in book prices which are already too high for the average East African.

Foreign exchange

To add to the aforesaid, all three East AFrican countries have an acute shortage of foreign exchange. Either the lack of it or delays in processing foreign exchange applications lead to delays in the importation of essential raw materials (like coated board which is not locally manufactured in Kenya) and hinder the performance of the publishing industry.

(ii) DISTRIBUTION

The other arm of the publishing industry is distribution. We shall quickly look at the distribution outlets open to the publisher in East Africa.

Booksellers:

There are very few booksellers in East Afria who, unfortunately, are mostly based in urban centres and yet 80 per cent of the population is rural based. It is, therefore, difficult for books to reach the majority of the people. Within the region are about 350 bookshops, most of which only engage in book trade during the peak selling period (January to March) and revert to other interests during the rest of the year. Compounded with this phenomenon of seasonal selling is the fact that most booksellers are undercapitalized and hardly maintain a wide selection of shelf stock that would attract readers into their shops.

On the other hand, the export market is restricted. Even where fast moving school textbooks are concerned, very little has been realized from inter-regional trade. The closure of the border between Kenya and Tanzania in 1977 and political instability in Uganda affected intra-regional trade. However, the border has since re-opened and there is increased regional cooperation through the Preferential Trade Area (PTA) which might see books published in one country selling in the sister states.

Libraries:

There are few and mostly understocked. In Kenya, the Kenya National Library Services has a programme to put up a Library in every district. So far, 15 libraries have been set up, but the pace of this expansion programme is far too slow. The Tanzania Library Service is equally active but is faced with the same problems as Kenya. In general libraries have very limited financial votes and have to rely on donations and promotion copies from publishers. Most widely needed titles are therefore restricted to reference sections.

Moreover, many readers find libraries depresssing and uncomfortable because of their rather intimidating atmosphere. If simple reading structures could be put up in rural areas, and if more mobile vans could transport books to such centres one would see more book circulation and increased sales.

Government distribution:

Distribution of books to schools in Kenya was previously done by the government through the Kenya Schools Equipment Scheme (KSES) which was later decentralized to the district level.

In Tanzania, Tanzania Elimu Supplies (TES) was set up in 1967 to distribute books published by TPH more efficiently and at cheaper prices, together with school equipment. TES has not succeeded in this task because of lack of trained manpower and poor control from the Ministry of Education. In Uganda government distribution is handled by the Uganda School Supplies Limited (USSL) but the organisation has been largely dormant due to the acute shortage of books in the country. The overall result has been that government involvement in book distribution tends to give advantage to government published titles, tends to by-pass the bookseller and does not augur well for a free and active book industry.

Underdeveloped transport network:

On the whole, the transport network within the region is underdeveloped. Although there is a railway network connecting many of the major towns in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, most of the outlying districts are difficult to penetrate, with Tanzania and Uganda having particularly poor roads. Many of these roads appear on maps as tarmac roads when in actual fact they have suffered from poor maintenance and have become weather beaten and inaccessible. Transportation is, therefore, slow and tedious, thus impairing book availability in many areas.

Underdeveloped Postal Network:

Kenya has quite an efficient postal network today, with at least a post office in every major town. Introduced recently was an express mail service between such major towns which operates within a minimum of 24 hours. The service, however, is expensive and not appropriate for bulk transportation of books.

In Uganda and Tanzania, Postal services are slow and expensive essentially because of poor roads as already stated.

Inadequate Promotion and exposure

Exhibitions and bookfairs within East Africa are few and far in between. The various participants in the book industry still need to work closely and organize occasions that will enlighten more people about their publications. Additional training for marketing personnel would also have to be stepped up.

(iii) UNDERDEVELOPED READING CULTURE

Apart from those production and distribution issues discussed, there are other factors which have to be considered when discussing publishing in East Africa. The region suffers from an underdeveloped reading culture brought about by a multiplicity of causative factors. Among them the following may be singled out:

Illiteracy

When the three East African countries became independent over 25 years ago, war against illiteracy was defined as one of the central national goals. This goal has been achieved to varying degrees. Tanzania, with a literacy rate of about 80% has the best record, thanks to an aggressive universal education programme.

Kenya, with a literacy rate of about 55% is deemed second, because the Ugandan situation is not quite clear. What is quite clear though, is that the waring factions have thrown the country's education system into disarray. Many children have had to desert school and run for their lives. Indeed only recently it was reported that the once illustrious and highly competitive Makerere University has far fewer students than it can accommodate.

But even in Tanzania and Kenya the situation is far from stable. One constant worry has been the relapsing into illiteracy of those who had been rehabilitated, largely due to the lack of relevant supportive literature. In Tanzania it is a particularly disturbing problem because even newspapers are difficult to come by due to production problems. The two dailies, Uhuru and Daily News, hardly circulate outside major towns.

The situation is slightly better in Kenya, with regular production and distribution of 3 dailies, The Nation, The Standard and The Kenya Times. There are also 12 Kiswahili rural newspapers covering specific parts of the country. These should go a long way in helping sustain literacy amongst school leavers and adult literacy learners. Still we should point out that even the Kenyan rural press operates amidst various managerial problems. Centralized decision making has time and again been responsible for delayed production and distribution.

Language Problems

If a book has to be widely read, it ought to be written in a language spoken by a majority of the people. Unfortunately this has not been the case in Kenya and Uganda. Most of the books available here have been in English which only 20% of the population can read and speak. There is, however, very little a publisher, on his own, can do to correct this situation. English is the language of instruction in school and all prospective employers insist on good passes in English. Unless local languages are assigned a specific role in national development, the situation in Kenya will remain much the same.

In Uganda, however, one of the prominent dailies, Muuno, is published in Luganda and unlike Kenya, there is a strong resistance against Kiswahili by the non-Bantu Ugandans.

The Tanzanian language problem is slightly different. While Kiswahili is very much encouraged at the lower educational level, there is a sudden switch to English in institutions of higher learning. This makes it fairly difficult for many to apply themselves well to reading English publications.

Reading habits

Reading is not a habitual thing in East Africa. We are by no means agreeing with the old time belief that Africans read only for examination purposes. This disinterest dates back to the colonial period when literature at that time tended to deride the African, making many people view books with consternation. This attitude has persisted over time and it is only recently that research shows more inclination towards voluntary reading, especially among the youth. Parents can help speed up this habit by reading with their children instead of just asking the latter to read.

Reading environment

Many people in East Africa live in poor low-quality shelters. About 10% only live in secure houses with electricity and other modern conveniences. Such an environment is not conducive to reading even if the books were available.

Underdeveloped economy

It is important that we look at all the issues mentioned above, but when all is said and done, the single central factor influencing publishing in East Africa is that of underdeveloped economies. The economies of these countries have yet to stabilize. The GNPs are still unimpressive with Per Capita Income in Kenya reported to be 420 US dollars, Uganda 220 US dollars and Tanzania 280 US dollars.

Peoples' incomes are generally low with high incidences of unemployment and underemployment. Many cannot afford books because their incomes are used to purchase basic necessities like food and shelter. Books become luxuries.

3. CURRENT POSITION

Among the three East African countries, Kenya seems to be the only one making some headway in local publishing. About 55% of the country's book requirements are met by local publishers. The rest are imported from overseas.

In Tanzania where, as we saw, book production is low, and in Uganda where publishing is virtually at a standstill, almost all the required books have to be imported. And because of foreign exchange constraints these imported books have to retail at high prices. Yet part of this price escalation is self imposed. For instance, when the Kenya-Tanzania border was closed, a Kenyan publisher wishing to sell to Tanzania had to do it via some London based middle-man. The World Bank has, in fact, recently decided to assist alleviate the book scarcity problem in Uganda by granting $3.5m for the purchase of educational books from the international market. Again, Kenyan published books bought have to be supplied through third parties overseas. But this is only a temporary solution - a longer term solution would be to resuscitate the publishing industry in Uganda.

Meanwhile, we must note that because of the disintegration of the EAC and the subsequent break up of the East African Examination Council, individual countries have come up with their own National Examination Councils. These councils, working together with national curriculum development centres, have developed increasingly differing emphases. So whereas Kenya could help alleviate the book hunger in her sister states, differences in the respective syllabuses would limite the extent of her assistance. Tanzania, for instance, has a defined socialist slant on education. Its totally different examination structure and its stated national goals to be realised through its education system cannot meaning-

fully benefit from books published in Kenya and specifically geared towards the new 8-4-4 examination structure. What we see then, apart from foreign exchange limitations, is a fragmented market.

But we stated that East African states have a common history and an inescapably common destiny. The problems that beset us are similar, if not the same. There is dire need to intensify regional cooperation and in so doing bring closer together our educational systems and minimize fragmentation of the market for our mutual benefit. Only then can we conceptualize something like a regional currency, which ironically existed during colonial days, to enable us circumvent the foreign exchange problem.

And indeed in Kenya, those involved with provision of educational material are beginning to recognize the need for a strong and vibrant publishing industry. At a recent UNESCO sponsored workshop in Nairobi which brought together authors, publishers, librarians, curriculum developers, publishers and government representatives, a number of recommendations were made. It would be correct to say that we, in this paper, subscribe to these recommendations. Indeed we would urge our counterparts in Uganda and Tanzania to work towards similar lines:

That, national book development councils be set up to coordinate the activities of the various parties that constitute the publishing industry. That, the Councils should specifically address themselves to the following:

i) The councils should ensure that authors' rights are protected in order to encourage them. Upcoming writers should be given encouragement and incentives by publishers providing guidelines on publishing procedure and establishing channels for fruitful communication with writers. For instance, creative writing should be encouraged in schools.

ii) The councils should assist in securing grants and loans for the publication of slow moving titles, especially in the areas of fiction, childrens' books and general books. They

should negotiate with governments for rebates on paper to keep book prices low and should assist printers to get raw materials at reasonable prices.

iii) The governments should be prevailed upon to avoid monopolistic tendencies on book publishing and distribution.

iv) The councils should help publishers to contract printing rights from foreign publishers. The actions of different publishers should be monitored by the councils to avoid in-fighting and duplication. Then the UNESCO coupon system should be revived.

v) On readership: children should be encouraged to start reading early, schools should be helped to have libraries and journals should be revived to help in disseminating information.

vi) Appropriate training programmes for the industry should be set up by soliciting for funds from governments and other donors. The emphasis on training should be local rather than foreign.

Such council's should be statutory bodies fully funded by the governments with authority to solicit for funds from other sources. They should be headed by non-executive chairmen and should have amongst their members senior government officials from various relevant ministries, as well as representatives from educational institutions and commercial organisations. They should benefit from representatives from relevant non-governmental organisations who would bring cooperation between the government and the private sector within the publishing industry.

As earlier stated, such a council has been proposed in Kenya and would do well for Uganda and Tanzania too. But over and above this, one wants to see more cooperation between the three sister states. And one hopes that through the PTA agreement, cooperation within East Africa will take on a much more solid manifestation.

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COOPERATION IN THE AREA OF DOCUMENTARY INFORMATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN: basic questions, projects analyses and proposals

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BRAZILIAN FEDERATION OF LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS
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COOPERATION IN THE AREA OF DOCUMENTARY INFORMATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN: basic questions, project analyses and proposals

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ABSTRACT

Based on the problems the ones that are not familiar with documentary information accomplishments in Latin America, it was decided to present a critical and refletive review, at first. Afterwards, in order to point out the existence of sources of information; projects and programs; organizations and information systems, it was registred a couple of them considered relevant. Possible missing information in this item is just due to the lack of bibliographical resources available in this area. As a conclusion, it was suggested an attempt to stimulate the production of bibliographical tools and, also, the promotion of events that can bring solutions for those critical questions mentioned. The following items were proposed: Courses, Yearbooks, Conferences and Information Resources specifically designed to the Latin American and the Caribbean information control.

SUMMARY

1 - CRITICAL POINTS

1.1 - First Considerations

It is necessary a better understanding among Latin America countries, in order to:

- make easier the communication between profissional and experts that should works together in regional projects;
- join people with different historical and development background, but presenting linguistic similiarities, factor of economical dependence and general needs that shall be discussed in groups;
- decide devices, channels and institutional responsabilities aiming to a bibliographic control of local information resources;
- avoid organizing several conferences, projects and programs that will be coincident and repetitive in their objectives;
- settle the principles to obtain better regional integration and cooperation in order to be in harmony with individual efforts;

. incorporate the idea of critical analysis for activities already accomplished in order to make easier the proposition of new projects and to begin a Latin American comparative production.

It is interesting to remember that about thirty years ago it was discussed at the University of São Paulo the cooperative acquisition and cataloging projects; interlibrary loan; document delivery servicee and the formation of an union catalog, but only recently USP's libraries became integrated in a system to obtain mainly planned acquisitions of publications and automation of the information available. This is an exemple among thousand ones in Latin America.

In general, in Latin America, there are few accomplishments because of poor financial supports. This is one of the reasons that has interfered with the creation and the development of the libraries in the region.

The isolacionism, the fear of lacking the autonomy, the slowness of decisions from the top manegement also has prevented the ultimation of cooperative projects.

It must not be forgetten, however, some other basic and critical questions as the dificulties with the creation the public and school libraries (until now not found in several Latin American countries); and also the inadequacy of professional library-training that culminates with lack of research and the delaying of the consolidation of the "critical mass".

Developed countries, that promate Latin American programs, have being observing better their own problems and understanding better their own failures. Nevertheless, it is about time that Latin American people, themselves, become conscious of their own failures and dificulties, looking for the best solution for them.

1.2 - Review of literature

1960-70 decades

Based on: "Information Systems in Latin America", by Tefko Saracevic; Gilda Braga; Alvaro Quijano Solis, respectively concerned with revisors from USA, Brasil, Mexico. (V. Annual Review of Information Science and Technology, v.14: 249-82, 1979).

It is demonstrated that in the 60's a social and economic development program was started, supported by international organizations. Science and Technology were increased, and, some concern to create information background was verified. In fact, in Latin America the situation of background in documentary information is not yet satisfactory.

The 70's

Is the above mentioned review, among the problems pointed out, the following were highligthed

. lack of awareness of the actual value of information, in general;
. changeable political situation; interruption of programs, preventing the long-term plans accomplishment;
. inadequacy of financial resources delivered to information systems;
. chaotic and spreaded literature, from which a great part is composed of

papers presented at congresses or typical cases without comprehensive coverage;

- difficulties concerning availability and accessibility of primary documents that depend on document delivery services;
- deficient education of information professionals;
- weak cooperation among information systems, not only concerning different countries, but within the same country, in the same city or institution, with different in-house systems.

The aspect of cooperation is not discussed enough in the literature. The duplications are conspicuous in the systms proposals, programs development, acquisitions, etc.

Among the difficulties, some can be cited:

a) technical;

b) mailing and telecommunications services;

c) union catalogs not updated;

d) human factors, internal policies, special characteristics.

The cooperation really felt among prof ssionals is doubtful. As "perceptions about future information needs", it is accepted that for different kinds of information needs there are different roles played for the countries development. A classification concerning the necessary knowledge of information:

"know-why", "know-how", and "show-how" concerning scientific, industrial and technical information, and also information for policy-making and decision making.

As a final remark, special attention is called for:

- considerable differences found in Latin American countries about their history, economy, socio-cultural background, agricultural, technical and industrial development, etc;
- lack of relevance and objectivity in the specialized literature about the conditions of information systems and their contribution for the development.

Only a few information systems are driven to develop a dynamic market, considering the following:

- users studies;
- dissemination and diffusion;
- repackaging of information;
- direct contacts with the user.

It has to be pointed out at this juncture, that the understanding of the fact that it is difficult to pursuit these activities because they are not part of the formation and tradition of the area. The use of information itself depends on factors that are not under systems control, such as:

- general education;
- technical training of potencial users.

Finally, the machine-readable data bases were opening their participation in the information systems at that time, but caused some discussion on independence vs. dependence.

1970-80 decades

Based on: "Tecnología de hoy", paper presented at the 41st FID Congress, by Margarita Almada de Ascensio, from Mexico (Rev. Lat. Doc. 2(2): 20-3, jul./dic. 1982).

Included in item 2 - Infrastructure of Information in the 3rd World Countries, the author comments on aspects that shall be considered about this subject:

- legal aspects;
- development of centers and information systems;
- human resources with suitable training in information technology, informatics, telematics, telecommunication and computers;
- library and archival services;
- user training.

Concerning the implementation of national systems in regional projects, in the 70's, the difficulties are the following:

- economic restraints;
- lack of adequately trained human resources;
- heterogeneous development of the infrastructural components;
- changes in priorities in the government programs;
- non-effective cooperation among institutions, due mainly to the lack of information related to the development of local services;
- lack of objectivity in the planning strategies;
- lack of priority for data bases.

1986-88

The INFOLAC, in its "Basic principles for a regional programme to strenghten co-operation among national informational netwc ks and systems for development in Latin America and the Caribbean" (Santiago, Chile, 1986), examining the current status of cooperative efforts in regard to the basic question that the region must answer on "how to lower cost and how to increase their final impact on decision-making concerning national development", on the period 1986-1990, points out some difficulties:

- the lack of a regional forum for information concerning inter-institutional projects;
- the lack of a common framework of information activities;
- the absence of a multilateral focus on cooperation in response to the countries interdependence;
- the loss of options as regards the development of national information infrastructure.

Also, when it is explained the five major areas of the Regional Programme, other difficuties are observed:

1 - Information projects and programmes management: insufficient national capabilities for designing information projects and programmes, and obtaining financing from external sources and from their own institutions.

2 - Evaluation of modern information management technologies: the information processing and transmission is made without a prior evaluation, having undersirable and irreversible consequences.

3 - Compatibilization, systemation and interconnection of non-numeric automated data bases: the situation is chaotic created by the existence on incompatible formats.

4 - Promotion of the use of services provided by information networks and systems: failures in taking full advantage of the large investment, and the systems are extremly under-utilized at present.

5 - Training of information specialists: shortage of qualified personnel capable of assuming either leadership roles or the newly-emerging technical responsabilities associated with such networks and systems.

So, we observe that, as the time goes on, the problems continues to occur We believe that, with the INFOLAC, some difficulties will be overcome. On the other hand, we believe, also, that simple devices useful to all Latin American countries must be developed.

2 - INFORMATION RESOURCES FOR LATIN AMERICA

This part of the present paper aims to consider about some information resources, organisms, projects and significant programs, in order point out this available material.

However, before mentioning cooperation, a bibliographic picture of reference material available, the programs of documentary information and the organisms which are responsible for projects and programs of this Conference will be mentioned below.

2.1 - Information Resources: Guide

Around 16 items were identified in a search of the "Manual de fuentes de información", by J.E.Sabor (3rd. ed., Buenos Aires, Marymar, 1978), and in libraries. There were encyclopedias, directories, bibliographic guides, bibliographies, reviews and yearbooks about Latin America. Some resources are out of date and we don't have notice about a possible interruption in publication.

2.2 - Organisms, agencies, associations

In order to provide some examples, a considerable amount of organisms which include service rendered in Latin America were found. Source: Yearbook of International Organizations (MÜchen, Saur, 1984). This is the basic source to identify information. Any way, there are a lot of organisms that have to be identified and registered. We intend to continue searching.

2.3 - Projects, programs, information systems, etc

Some projects and programs identified led us to observe that there is a need to accomplish or to increase the work already under way. Others, however, are duplicating efforts. We believe that only after obtaing a more complete picture of

actual cooperation among information professionals and systems.

Among the agencies and programs that intend to promote the development of information systems and stimulate the information professionals to the regional cooperation, it was selected some of them:

. UNESCO: Unisist and PGI;

. IFLA and sections for Latin America and the Caribbean.

It is very important to point out its six programs: Universal Bibliographic Control; Universal Accessibity of Publications; International Marc Program; Preservation and Conservation; International Data Flow; Development for Third World Librarianship.

INFOBILA: Mexican Databases on Latin America Librarianship information.

INFOLAC: "Regional Programme to Strengthen Co-operation among National Information networks and Systems for Development in Latin America and the Caribbean". Sponsored by UNESCO/PGI and CEPAL/CLADES, is being prepared from 1982 to 87, with five meetings held in Caracas and Chile. In 1986 was published its "Basic Principles". The Technical Secretary, in Chile, is publishing a "Hoja Informativa" (Newsletter) to inform the development of the INFOLAC.

This is the more specific and comprehensive programme devoted to the cooperation in the area of documentary information, but it is not so much known.

CCR/PS: "Regional Programme to the Serial Union List in America Latina". OEA/UNESCO - INFOLAC. The first meeting to analyse the program was held in Brasília (Brazil), on June 1-5th, 1987, with representatives of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Uruguai, ISIS. They discussed the objectives, devices for documents delivery services and the organization of a Serial Directory.

SALALM: "Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials", Universities: Stanford; California; Berkeley. Among 25 committees, one is related to "Interlibrary Cooperation", and others to Latin America "Bibliography".

INFORMATION SERVICES ON RESEARCH IN PROGRESS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN: Directory; sponsered by UNESCO.

SIAB/LAC: Information System to LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS IN LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN: project. The initial idea comes from a meeting in Buenos Aires, 1982. An ante-project was presented by Elisabeth Maria Ramos de Carvalho (Brazilian Federation of Libray Associations), at the "Seminario Latinoamericano de Asociaciones de Bibliotecarios de America Latina e Caribe", June 1987, Caracas.

The main objectives are concerned with:

. increase of the information prof ssionals and of the associations;

. quality of their production;

. better communication among the association;

. a clearinghouse for Latin American and the Caribbean materials

...and other projects and programmes already identified and to be identified after this Conference...

For complete information about these projects and programmes the original is available to be consulted.

3.- PROPOSALS

We cannot continue complaining, but make decisions suitable for the difficulty identified. As final contribuition, in a traditional way, some simple suggestions will be analysed and somehow can be considered for further acceptance. We are not intending just to make suggestions that will not have a possibility to be applied, for many reasons; so, the contribuition of the audience will be welcome.

In this particular, our attention focuses four points: Courses, Yearbooks, Meetings and Manual of Information Resources, specially project to Latin America and the Caribbean.

3.1 - Courses

For better integration of professionals that will be responsible for inter--regional cooperative programs, the best way would be the organization of basic courses on Latin America bring together there people. They can be developed in various countries, in alternate periods, and considering the subject in such a way that the main points of each country are analysed. Organizing work groups and preparing seminars and papers, Latin American librarians would certainly become more integrated professionaly and personally speaking.

3.2 - Yearbooks

Based on the framework of the Statesman's Yearbook and of the South American Handbook, a yearbook should be produced by a Latin American organism, in Spanish or Portuguese, in order to become an information source for the best understanding of each country, as well as to be used as guides by foreign visitors and to experts interested in obtaining data on documentary information. The following plan is suggested:

1 - International organizations;

2 - Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, in alphabetical order, containing:

- for each country, core information on history, area, population, government, diplomatic body, international relations, economy, education, religion, industry and trade, communications, maps, and whatever material that would be asked by foreign visitors;
- an item would be concerning to documentary information. Under certain descriptors, bibliographies, inventory lists about research in progress, several records about events (courses, congresses, meetings, etc), projects and programs, organisms, information systems, etc. about Latin America and the Caribbean shall be recorded.

3.3 - Congresses, Seminars, Meetings on Documentary Information in Latin America

A program of events related to the area of documentary information, specifically to set up a forum of discussions of their critical points and to spread new results and experiments, need to be planned and organized by Latin American groups, aiming:

- to be held, regularly, in different countries of Latin America and the Caribbean;
- to be chosen remarkable subjects and approaches for specifically focusing the documentary area of Latin America and the Caribbean and, in the long run, analysing comparatively the notable research and library services of this region;
- to be obtained a good level of technical-scientific production, taking into account quality filters from the establishment of previous and rigourous criteria for the selection of spontaneous papers;
- to be published the Congresses proceedings just in time for the community to acquire new knowledge and know new professional experiences and tecnologies.

It is necessary to be discussed, in this meeting or in a further occasion, the above questions and others related to financing supports and which Latin American organization could be responsible for programming and controling these events.

3.4 - Control of bibliographic information to or about Latin America and the Caribbean

- CONCLUSIONS -

The main point of this paper is "to convoke Latin America professionals to the cooperation and understanding in the area of the documentary information".

If the information professionals couldn't find means to put then "house in order", there will be serious obstacles concerning the causes of cooperation, in such a way that it shall be difficult to arrive to a final accomplishment.

Besides all these mentioned points, we must stress on the due care of the bibliographical organization of this area for the following points:

1 - Control of primary documents, by means of National Bibliography, Specialized Bibliographies and Indices (like Index Medicus Latinoamericano);

2 - Directories for projects and programs; Lists of research in progress..., organizations, events, etc.;

3 - Sources of information

Based on the structures of Sabor's "Manual de fuentes de información" or Geoghan "Obras de Referência de América Latina", it would be produced cooperatively by a Latin America group, in Spanish or Portuguese, this manual will to achieve an exaustive control of Latin America and the Caribbean materials.

Besides the conventional material, included commonly in bibliographic manuals (encyclopaedias, dictionnaires, bibliographies, directories, yearbooks, etc), special sections must be designed for specific material or data for: journals; projects and programs; list of events, organizations and agencies that promote activities related to the area of documentary information at national or regional levels.

In fact, it is important to discuss the convenience of our proposals and, with caution, to think of the responsabilities, strategies, the most convenient date for planning the Manual, the bibliographic series, the schedule for establishing the events, and other points that enlance the better understanding of Latin America for the information professionals.

Finally, we would like to remind you that this paper is only the beginning of a reflection on this theme concerning documentary information, having as a perspective a complexe of factors that involved cooperation.

We expect to have offered some direction to those people who will be interested in discussing or intend to provide some project or activity in this matter.

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Ron DAVIS:

MOBILE LIBRARIES

THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN & NORTHERN TERRITORY EXPERIENCE

It is a basic tenet of public librarianship that every individual should have access to a free public library service within the local community.

The traditional way of providing that library service is to provide a static service point however, in many countries the decision in favour of a mobile service point has been made for a whole variety of reasons.

If you read the literature on the provision of mobile library services a number of basic principles quickly establish themselves. Mobile libraries tend to be used for one or more of the following reasons:-

- to provide a service to isolated and scattered pockets of population in rural areas.
- to provide an interim service in an urban fringe area where there are changes in the population pattern and often rapid population growth.
- to provide an interim service to enable the library authority to determine where the best location for a library might be or to determine whether or not there is sufficient demand for a library service. The mobile library is seen as a test bed before expensive capital decisions are made.

In this paper I am not addressing the other role of smaller mobile libraries and vehicles which are designed to service particular groups in the urban community who for a range of reasons do not have ready access to an existing static service point.

Traditionally in Europe, North America and in the Eastern States of Australia mobile libraries have been seen as a means of providing service for one or more of the situations detailed above.

In Western Australia and the Northern Territory the use of mobile libraries has been much more limited.

Western Australia had at the 30 June 1986 a population of 1.459 million, while the Northern Territory had a population of only 0.154 million. In Western Australia more than 70% of the population live in the Perth Metropolitan area. In the Northern Territory 50% of the population live in the Darwin Metropolitan area. In both Western Australia and the Northern Territory there are no large centres of population outside the capital cities.

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In the Northern Territory the second largest population centre is Alice Springs with a population of 25,000, that town is more than 2,000 kilometres from Darwin. In Western Australia the largest town outside the Perth metropolitan area is Bunbury with a population of 25,000.

Western Australia is by far the largest state in Australia occupying an area of 2.525 million square kilometres. The Northern Territory is the third largest state or territory occupying an area of 1.346 million square kilometres. These two states and territories together comprise more than 50% of the total Australian land mass but have only 10% of Australia's population. Given the isolated and scattered nature of the population it is not surprising that development of library services has differed from the accepted norm when providing service to more isolated population areas.

It is important that visitors to Australia realise the size of the continent. I recall reading a report on mobile library services in the United Kingdom which argued for mobile libraries because of the large areas that had to be serviced with a scattered population, I must quote.

"Somerset is not an easy County in which to provide a good comprehensive library service as it is, in area, one of the largest counties stretching some eighty miles from East to West and a similar distance from North to South. It has a large number of small towns, some of these being only a few miles apart."

The differences in scale are enormous and the European solution of a mobile library does not fit readily into areas such as Western Australia and the Northern Territory.

The State Library Service of Western Australia and the Northern Territory Library Service have both chosen to provide static service points even in small isolated communities. Communities with a population as low as 200 in the Northern Territory have static service points with a minimum book stock of 1,000 items. In Western Australia similarly small communities have static service points with a minimum book stock of 800 volumes.

One of the arguments in favour of mobile libraries over static service points for very small communities is that because the mobile library has access to a larger collection of resources from a central pool it is able to always provide fresh material when it makes its fortnightly or weekly visit. The West Australian and Northern Territory solution on the other hand is to centralise stock and to circulate stock on a regular basis among the static service points so that in small libraries the entire stock circulates within a twelve month period.

The role of the mobile library fits somewhere between the provision of a static service point and the provision of a mail service direct to the reader. In the Northern Territory a direct mail service is provided to readers who are very isolated.

A survey was conducted in 1975 in Pennsylvania by Professor Teh-Wei Hu. He carried out a benefit cost analysis of alternative library delivery systems and found that the mail order programme of delivering books to individuals in Pennsylvania was more effective than the bookmobile programmes that were surveyed in that state. One could argue as to the definition of effective but it was certainly the view of the Northern Territory Library Service that delivery by mail to isolated readers was more economic and effective than the use of mobile libraries.

Essentially this is due to the enormous distances which would need to be traversed in order to get from one location to the next. Climatic conditions in the north west of Western Australia and in the top end of the Northern Territory make it difficult if not impossible to reach some communities during certain seasons of the year when roads become impassable.

The very considerable distances between communities also militates against a mobile library service. For a mobile library to be effective it must spend the greater part of its time onsite servicing communities. If that mobile library spends more than fifty percent of its time travelling between communities its value is dramatically reduced. In Western Australia outside the south west land division and in the entire Northern Territory at least three quarters of the time would be spent travelling. The perceived advantages and economies of the mobile library service rapidly disappear under such conditions.

In the Northern Territory there are no mobile libraries. In Western Australia there is only one service which could be construed as being a mobile library. The Shire of Wanneroo, which is located in the northern part of the Perth metropolitan area does provide a mobile library. It is a rapidly developing local government authority with a population of approximately 160 000 and its northern most area is primarily rural with some rapid development. A traditional mobile library service has been provided by the Shire of Wanneroo to service the needs of its northern communities and the pattern there would be very similar to that which applies to mobile libraries in the Eastern States of Australia. The Library Board of Western Australia established standards for the introduction of mobile libraries and I quote from those standards:

"In areas of low density population, particularly in outer metropolitan areas, there are occasions when consideration can be given to providing a library service using a mobile library instead of a static branch. Mobile libraries are not inexpensive; they have high running costs, depreciate rapidly

and are not a cheap alternative to the provision of static service points. They cannot provide as good a level of service as a static branch, and detailed investigation will frequently demonstrate the need for the establishment of static branches instead of a mobile library service."

In the Library Board's conditions it will only agree to a provision of a mobile library where the local government authority area has a population density of more than twenty persons per square kilometre and less than 750 persons per square kilometre. The view of the State Library Service of Western Australia is that there is perhaps a role for mobile libraries in the state but it is not a large one. This has been reflected by the fact that only one local government authority out of 139 does in fact provide such a service. That authority being the one which most closely mirrors the situation in other Australian States where mobile libraries are used and also the European and North American experience.

Lest you should think that I am opposed to mobile libraries I should confess that at an earlier stage of my career I was in charge of a mobile library I do not see the mobile library as the panacea and the solution for providing service to isolated communities in all situations. The experience in Western Australia and the Northern Territory has been markedly different from most other places and I believe we have demonstrated that there are other solutions to the problem of providing a good quality library service to people living in isolated areas.

Ron Davis

Martin Field:

"THE WAGON IS THE THING"

The Geelong Regional Library Service operates three Mobile Libraries, the largest fleet of such vehicles in Victoria covering a total of 1,000 kilometres every week. Two of the vehicles serve premominately rural areas while the third serves a predominately urban area.

This paper examines the relative success of the Mobile Library Service in the disparate situations. (Let me say here that I deliberately select the term Mobile Library - rather than Bookmobile - 'our vehicles carry more than just books.) The Geelong Regional Library is an autonomous body formed by six co-operating Local Government Authorities to provide a cost effective free Public Library Service to their combined populations of 130,000 in the Municipalities of Barrabool, Bellarine, Corio, Geelong, Newtown & Queenscliffe. Three of the six contributing Municipalities provide a Mobile Library Service - the Shires of Corio and Bellarine and Barrabool. Barrabool, an entirely rural Shire of 596 square klms, with several small townships but no urban centre, uses a Mobile Library exclusively. The Shires of Bellarine and Corio each with both Urban and Rural areas to service, have Branch Libraries and one Mobile Library each.

The City of Geelong has enjoyed a free Public Library Service since 1841 - however then it was little more than a library in name only, until 'taken over' by the Geelong City Council in 1949. In 1963 the Shire of Corio entered into an Agreement to provide a joint free Library Service. This Agreement marked the beginning of the Regional Library Service. Initially, the Shire of Corio provided a library service to its 56,000 residents through a Mobile established in a converted bus, carrying up to 2,000 volumes. This vehicle was to provide more than twenty years of Service - double the recommended life time of such a vehicle. In this vehicle the cab was isolated from the body. A poor design feature, wasting space and restricting natural lighting to the interior of the vehicle. In later vehicles, the cab is open to the body, and the large windscreen provides good natural lighting, and the area of the cab, while it cannot be used for shelving, provides greater area, creating an illusion of greater spaciousness. It is particularly important that Mobile Libraries should have good natural lighting. Without this the vehicles can seem unpleasantly claustrophobic.

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A Mobile Library Service was provided for three reasons 1.) Limited financial resources prevented the provision of a building. 2.) The Shire incorporates a large rural area, which could only be served by a Mobile Library, and 3) Councillors saw the Mobile Library as a good means of 'testing the water' - a relatively inexpensive form of library provision which could reveal whether or not Ratepayers would use the Service sufficiently to justify the substantial investment required for a purpose built Library.

One of the many advantages of the Mobile Library is its ability to test the demand for public library services in a wide range of localities at a relatively low cost - although it can only give an indication of general need, particularly in situations where a full service is available within a reasonable distance. In such circumstances there will be many residents who will prefer to travel some distance rather than rely on the somewhat limited resources of the Mobile Library.

In the event, the Mobile Library was an instant success, and on its first day of operation the vehicle had to make an unscheduled return to base to restock shelves after issuing every single book on its shelves within the first few hours!

In due course a Branch Library was built next to the Council Swimming Pool at a prominent site close to the junction of two main roads. In a predominantly urban area, with 90% of the population resident within 3 km of a Branch Library, a Mobile Library might have been considered superfluous. However, the Mobile Library Vehicle was retained. The shire of Corio has an area of 700 sq. km. and a population of 56,000 (1986). 90% of the population resides in the urban areas of Corio, Norlane and North Geelong with the majority of the remainder centered on two rural hamlets, Lara, and Anakie, 15 & 35 kms distance respectively. Retention of the Mobile Library has enabled the Shire to provide a library service to its residents in the Rural Areas, and in addition the vehicle is used extensively in the Urban areas of the Shire. Corio Shire residents are typically low-income families. Public transport is limited, as in most Australian provincial cities, and the Shire's residential districts are artificially bi-sected by the Melbourne Road - a six lane freeway carrying traffic between Melbourne and Geelong and the Western Coastal District.

In the circumstances, access to the centrally-sited Library is more restricted than might be anticipated in an Urban area of only 23 sq. kms., and the Mobile Library provides an essential and valued adjunct to the Shire Library.

Sites are visited some on a weekly basis, but most on a fortnightly basis. Brief stops, averaging one hour, enable the vehicle to visit many sites but the popularity of the Service necessitates almost daily returns to base with adequate time for re-stocking the shelves, limiting the vehicles availability. Consideration is therefore being given to using the Regional Library's delivery van to provide fresh stock 'on the run', and thus increase on-site time.

The Shire's first Mobile Library was replaced after six years service, and was sold to the nearby rural Shire of Barrabool. It was replaced by a similar bus-chassis based unit. When this vehicle was in its turn due for replacement, the opportunity was taken to re-assess the Mobile Service. Despite the vehicle's cramped interior and limited shelf space, it continued to be well used. In addition, a careful assessment of the growth of two rural townships served confirmed that meither would justify the construction of a Branch Library within the next ten years. As a result the decision was then to provide the largest possible Mobile Unit, doubling book capacity and providing a spacious interior.

Plans and Specifications were drawn up by Library Staff liaising with Shire Engineering Staff. Tenders were called for a 17 metre articulated vehicle. (At that time, the largest vehicle permitted by the State's Traffic Regulations). The trailer was built to the Regional Library's Specifications by BRIMARCO of Ballarat, Victoria. It includes a hydraulically operated issue desk 'capsule' (2m wide, 2m deep and 2.085m high) which extends 1.05m from the side of the trailer when the vehicle parks for business. This feature allows for maximum space within the trailer as the issue desk area occupies minimal internal space. The trailer carries approximately 5,500 volumes, and there is special shelving for magazines and AV material. There is also special storage for a small photocopier. The unit is fully airconditioned and has automatic doors.

It is powered by a super-charged Isuzu with power steering which is adequate for the relatively flat terrain and urban areas of this Mobile Library's route. The more hilly areas and greater distances covered by the Region's Barrabool Mobile Library would require a more powerful prime mover. Detailed consideration was given to the internal colour scheme, and the interior gives the impression of airy spaciousness due to the careful use of subtle pastel colours. Shelves are all full timber with a light stain, (no faced particle board!) and slightly raked. Forward facing shelves at the rear of the vehicle, and all higher shelves are carpet covered to prevent books moving in transit. The issue desk 'capsule' includes a small sink and fridge. Two large windows give plenty of natural light.

Internal dimensions of the trailer area: 1239m long, 2.338m wide and 2.625m high. The front section of the trailer, over the 'goose neck' is reached by two broad steps and this area has been set aside as the Children's Section. Internal height in this area is reduced to 2.091m high. Shelving in the Children's section is deeper and shelf heights have also been increased to accomodate the preponderance of quarto books. (The highest shelf in this area is at only 1.35m). In the adult section shelf depth has reduced to 250mm overall, both to maximise interior space and to ensure good book display. (Deeper shelving, particularly when it is raked, means that the average book sits well back from the front of the shelf with the result that a glance around the average Mobile Library shows more of the shelving than the books.) The top shelf in this section is at 1.968m. This is quite a stretch for some readers, but it is intended mainly for extra storage, for carrying additional volumes to re-stock the shelves below during the course of the day. Throughout the trailer there are windows above the shelves 1m wide, and 305m deep in the main body and 1m by 205m in the 'goose neck' section. The weight of the trailer including stock is approximately 11 tonnes.

Special consideration was given to the exterior. A local Council supported Arts Organisation was commissioned to decorate the exterior like a giant mural. The design concept, developed by myself, was to use simple carricatures of famous Australians from all walks of life - sportsmen, filmstars, musicians, television personalities etc, as well as characters from children's fiction to show the Community that

the Library has something for everyone - no matter what your hobby or interest, one of the many faces will be familiar enough to excite your interest and encourage you to take a look inside. The result is certainly eye-catching. Total cost of the vehicle, excluding books, was $63,000 for the trailer and $36,000 for the prime mover.

The Shire of Barrabool, with a population of 7,600 spread over an area of 594 sq. kms. and half a dozen small townships, faced particular difficulties in providing an ecomomic library service. The Shire has no true urban centre, and until this year, the Municipal Offices were housed in rented premises within the City of Geelong. Despite their relative isolation, residents demanded access to public library service, and when the Shire of Corio sold its first Mobile Library Vehicle at six years old, Barrabool ceased the opportunity to obtain an inexpensive Mobile Library. The vehicle covers a distance of 500 kms. per week, visiting townships and hamlets with population varying from 20 to 1,700. Recently the operation has been increased to provide library service on Saturday morning to the largest township in the Shire.

The hilly country, relatively long distances covered, combined with many miles of poor, and in some cases unsealed roads places considerable demands on the vehicle. The terrain covered by this vehicle is in stark contrast to the flat terrain and good road surfaces in Corio Shire, and illustrates the importance of taking these factors into consideration when designing or purchasing a Mobile Library vehicle.

After seventeen years service with Barrabool Shire (a service life of 23 years in total) the original vehicle was sold. It was replaced by another second hand vehicle, a ten year old International purchased from Sherbrooke, in the suburbs of Melbourne. After some modifications this vehicle's carrying capacity was increased to 3,000 volumes. In this vehicle the cab is open to the vehicles interior - providing an illusion of extra space, together with good natural lighting from the large windscreen. However, it is now evident after two years service that this vehicle, while more modern and spacious than its predecessor, is not constructed robustly enough for the terrain it covers.

Service is frequently disrupted by breakdowns, and the bodywork now requires strengthening to improve stability and rigidity. Despite problems, the vehicle is well patronised, and the Shire has plans to introduce a new Articulated Unit, carrying nearly double the number of books within the next four years.

The Shire of Bellarine, with a population of 35,000 covers an area of 331 sq. kms. Within this Shire two suburban areas are provided with Branch Libraries- the remainder of the population live mostly in nine townships with populations varying from 580 - 3,660. These townships are served by a Mobile Library Van, similiar to that now used by Barrabool Shire, which covers an average of 200 kms per week. In contrast to the other two Shires, where the area's Mobile Library stop is of relatively short duration, the Bellarine Mobile Library spends an entire day at one outer suburban centre, and stops of three hours duration are common at others. The present vehicle is due for replacement in two years time, and consideration is currently being given to purchasing two articulated units with one prime mover. With such an establishment, one unit can be hauled to a different site early each morning and left all day, while the second is used to provide a more traditional Mobile Library Service.

Of the three Mobile Library Vehicles, the two older units are petrol powered. Ten years ago when they were built, diesel motors were not suited to the relatively short distances covered between stops. The new Corio Mobile's prime-mover is diesel and this is more economical to run. A third alternative to consider is L.P. Gas, which results in efficiencies in servicing. Currently in Victoria, the preference is for diesel.

The Regional Library considers its Mobile Libraries a regular part of the total library network, and not simply as temporary alternatives to permanent branch libraries.

Properly managed Mobile Libraries can provide as good a library service as a small part-time branch with the bonus of versatility. As communities change or the centre of population alter, so can the Mobile Library Schedule.

Patricia Salau, Regional Librarian at Swan Hill, noted in her paper to the Bookmobile Seminar in Melbourne in 1976, that "3 factors determined success" -

1. The Person manning the Mobile.
2. The quality of Public Relations between the Mobile Library and its communities.
3. The goals set by Library Headquarters in conjunction with Mobile Library personnel.

I would add a fourth, the relationship between Mobile Library Personnel and Library Headquarters Personnel.

It is essential that the Mobile Library operation is perceived to be of equal importance with all other Library Services. The Mobile Library driver is not just an individual with a special drivers licence who can issue books, but a Branch Librarian. The person must have excellent communication skills, be self reliant, be above all a book lover, a book reader who can talk knowledgably about the stock. He/she must take the part of many Library Personnel - Readers Adviser, Children's Librarian, Reference Librarian etc. etc. The Mobile Library Officer is the Library Services roving Ambassador. Barrett Reid noted, that "The total Library Service, as seen by the average Library User, was the service he received at his own local level." For a Mobile Library Service to be successful therefore, it is important that Administrators do not accept too many limitations which might seem appropriate for 'only a Mobile Service.'

In our experience in Geelong, our Mobiles provide an equal service to our small branches, and a more effective service. Last year, our three smallest branch libraries - one full time and two part-time tied up 15% of bookstock and provided 7% of total regional loans. Our three Mobile Libraries tied-up 6% of bookstock and provided 15% of loans. With a total of three staff, the Mobile Libraries opened for a total of 68 hours in 42 centres. The Branches with 2½ staff for 48 hours in three centres per week. ..

I believe a combination of large well-sited static libraries, and a fleet of Mobile Libraries would have many advantages:

1. Financial cost of small static libraries plus equipment is more than for a large articulated mobile.

2. Mobiles tie-up far less stock in unproductive closed times.

3. Small static libraries have a limited geographical catchment area.

4. Mobile Libraries are in themselves excellent public relations - making the Public Library a visible vital presence throughout the community.

5. Mobile Libraries are flexible and can economically serve very small centres of population. Visits can be timed to coincide with local events which already draw people together at one centre - school closing time for example.

6. Mobile Libraries are versatile and can change with the community - reflecting moves in centres of population, developments of new residential areas, etc.

7. Experience shows that doubling opening hours of small branches wil not substantially increase loans, but by using two crews, operating in shifts, a Mobile Library can double the sites it visits and cover its area more effectively.

8. In rural areas, the arrival of the Mobile is an Event - a practical reminder and demonstration of the local Shire's Contribution in the Community.

In conclusion I quote one of the earliest Mobile Library Officers, the indomitable Miss Titcomb, who operated an American horse-drawn library wagon. (carrying 250 books over 500 square miles of territory).

In 1907 she said

"the Wagon is the thing"

As well try to resist
the pack of the pedlar from the Orient
as the shelf full of books when the doors of the
wagon are opened at one's gateway.

....9

"the Wagon is the thing." (cont.)

Much more is accomplished
than the mere Circulation of books.
Human relations are established.
In countless ways,
the visit of the Wagon becomes a blessing.
To drive a Wagon is an all-round job,
but one that brings its own reward
in the respect and affection won."

Martin Field,
REGIONAL LIBRARY MANAGER.
GEELONG REGIONAL LIBRARY SERVICE,
GEELONG.

17th August, 1988.

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